

Our Hope



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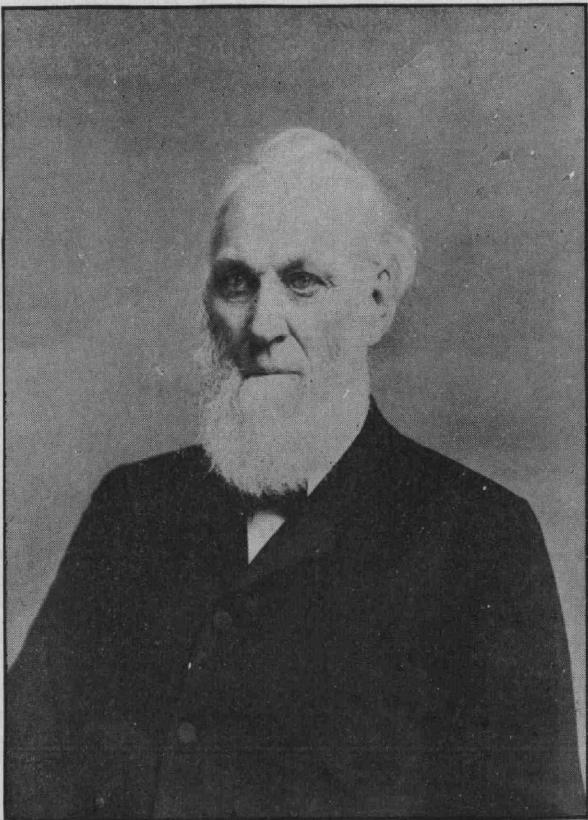
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# OUR HOPE:

OR,

## WHY ARE WE ADVENTISTS?

THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST, THE RESURRECTION  
OF THE DEAD, THE INHERITANCE OF THE SAINTS,  
AND FINAL DISPOSITION OF THE WICKED,  
CONSIDERED FROM A BIBLE STANDPOINT.

BY  
E. A. STOCKMAN.

"Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me."—JOHN v. 39.

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*SEVENTH EDITION.*

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## P R E F A C E.

THIS book is offered to the public in response to many inquiries as to what the people called Adventists believe, and the reasons of their faith, especially in relation to the second and near coming of Christ, the resurrection of the dead, the saints' inheritance, conditional immortality, and the final disposition of the wicked. These subjects are receiving more than ordinary attention from Bible students.

At our earnest request, Eld. E. A. Stockman, the able Editor of the WORLD'S CRISIS, has written a series of doctrinal articles for the paper, in which he has carefully considered the above subjects from a Bible standpoint, in a clear biblical light, clothing his thoughts in his inimitable style, which we think cannot fail to please and convince the candid reader. It has been long desired that a work of this kind should be published for general circulation among the people, that they might thus better understand our views, and be made acquainted with the reasons of our hope. The subjects considered are not burdened with detrimental and speculative

theories, but the testimony of the inspired writers is given upon each subject, in order that the reader may judge from inspired authority, rather than the opinions of men.

Much of this book has appeared in the columns of the **WORLD'S CRISIS**, and elicited requests from many that it should be republished in tracts or a book. This was our purpose from the first, and we herewith present the articles, with much also from the same author which has not appeared in the columns of the **CRISIS**.

The subjects are of vast importance to the Christian world, and constitute the foundation of the hope of the church of Christ. We send this book forth with a prayerful heart, that it may receive a kind reception, and be the means of shedding light upon the pathway of life, and of awakening an interest in a study of the Scriptures, and a preparation for the coming of our Lord and final judgment.

We have put the price very low, in order that all may avail themselves of the work, and do something towards circulating gratuitously a large edition to Christian workers for free distribution, thus helping to spread the "Gospel of the Kingdom."

Agent.

*144 Hanover Street, Boston, Mass.*

## WHY ARE WE ADVENTISTS?

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### THE COMING ONE.

THE Scriptures are self-interpreting. All Bible topics should be considered in the focal light of the entire Scriptures. God is his own interpreter. Revelation is the unfolding of God's great harmonious purpose and plan of redemption; to a proper comprehension of which a clear understanding of certain fundamental or key truths is imperatively essential. Such a truth is the Second Advent of Christ.

The whole vast wealth of New Testament doctrine centres in the "coming of the Lord." Every sentiment of the gospel draws its beauty and power, largely, from the Second Appearing. The personal return of the Christ is the key to immortality and glory. The revelation of the Son of God from heaven is the high-arched golden gateway to the kingdom universal and everlasting. Misconception of the doctrine of the Second Advent of Christ is likely to lead to false views of the entire redemptive economy. This doctrine stands at the threshold of true prophetic interpretation and New Testament exegesis.

The coming of the Lord Jesus, in some sense and manner, is recognized in the Creeds and Articles

of Religion of entire Christendom, Roman, Greek and Protestant; but as to the nature, objects and time of that event, the most contradictory views prevail. This confusion of opinions arises not from obscurity in the revelation of this doctrine, but from the adoption by skeptical theology of philosophical methods of interpretation. It is quite safe to assert that no other event is more positively and unmistakably set forth in the Inspired Word than the Second Advent of our Lord, including the manner, purposes and approximate time of his coming. We appeal to the plain text of the Sacred Book.

**HOW MANY COMINGS OF THE LORD ARE PREDICTED  
IN THE BIBLE?**

It is popularly taught that Christ comes daily, hourly, perpetually; in every calamity, in every blessing, in every providence, in every judgment, in grace, in conversion, in sanctification, at baptism, at confirmation, at birth, at marriage, at death. That is to say, he comes perpetually; which means, if it means anything, that he is always here. And many affirm that no other coming is to be expected.

But the Bible says nothing of the Master's coming in any such way. The Divine Book gives no intimation of such frequent visitations by our Lord. If it be said he comes thus by his Holy Spirit, we answer, that is in no sense the personal coming of Christ, but rather the *sending* of another. So Jesus said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you *another* Comforter, that he may abide with

you forever." John 14: 15, 16. "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me." John 15: 26. The Spirit is thus promised to take the place of Christ during his absence. And Christ further said, "Nevertheless, I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you." John 16: 7. Positively clear is it from these texts that during the time of the Spirit's presence here as the Comforter, the Saviour is absent; so, if the Spirit has not yet left the church and the world, then Christ has not yet returned.

The Scriptures never confound the gift and work of the Spirit with the coming of Christ; nor are blessings or judgments, either personal or national, anywhere in the Sacred Writings described as the Second Advent of the Lord.

Moreover, if Christ comes every day and hour, then just as often and for just so long a time as he is here with his church he must be absent from his mediatorial seat and office, and the world, therefore, without a Mediator, for Jesus is a strictly personal being; and having taken upon himself the human form and flesh, and passed triumphantly through death and the grave, and ascended to the place of power, and "sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high," to make intercessions for our poor lost world, he cannot, in his own nature, and in the nature of his official relations and work, be

both there and here at the same time. And it was for the very reason that he was going away and to be absent for a long time that he promised to send, and did send "another Comforter," even the "Spirit of truth."

The truth is, our blessed Lord has never visited our world, the scene of his anguish and death, since he went away. Since the grand, thrilling moment when the enraptured gaze of the bewildered disciples followed the glorious form of their ascending Lord, till the radiant clouds enfolded him from their view, no mortal eye hath seen his face, no mortal ear hath heard his voice, no Bethany home hath shone with the light and love of his presence, no graves have opened at his word, no dead have arisen at his touch, no mountain top hath been enwreathed with the glory of his person.

But he promised that he would "come again," not the ten-millionth time, but the "second time"; and that promise remains to be fulfilled. Meantime he hath sent "another Comforter," who is with us still, and will abide with us until our "Nobleman" shall return. When Jesus comes again he will take us to himself, that where he is there we may be also.

Inspiration teaches two coming of Christ, and only two. His first coming was with a sin-offering—himself the offering. "So Christ was *once* offered to bear the sins of many." Heb. 9: 28. But one coming of Christ as the Sin-bearer was predicted: "Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and

then for the people's; for this he did *once*, when he offered up himself." Heb. 7: 27.

His second coming will be without a sin-offering. "Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." Heb. 9: 28. And besides these two comings,—the first to put away sins, and the SECOND "without sin [a sin-offering] unto salvation,"—no other coming is predicted in the Divine Records.

The texts just quoted prove that Christ's *second* coming will be his last coming—his coming not as Sin-bearer, but as Judge: "Who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom." 1 Tim. 4: 1.

"Christ having once died to bear the sins (the punishment due to them) of many, even as many as are born into the world—will appear the *second* time, when he comes to judgment, without sin. Not as he came before, bearing on himself the sins of many, but to bestow everlasting salvation."—John Wesley.

Only the first coming of Christ has yet occurred. But one more coming remains—the *second* and last, or judgment coming. When next he comes it will be "in flaming fire, taking vengeance on those who know not God."

But is there not a mixed or double sense in which the Lord's coming is to be understood? So many persons believe. But if this view is correct, then there must be three comings. For the first was in expiation of sin, or as the Sin-bearer, at the

period of the crucifixion; and the *second* is declared to be, as we have shown by direct Scripture testimony, for the purpose of judging the world and bestowing upon saints eternal salvation. But the Bible nowhere speaks of a third coming, or "appearing," but of a first and *second* only.

In support of the view we are now considering, Matt. 28: 20 is often quoted: "And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." It will be noticed that this text says nothing of the *coming* again of Christ to the disciples after going away from them, but, "Lo, I am *with* you *alway*"; which implies that he would never leave them. But he had previously informed them that he was going away.

How, then, are these words—"Lo, I am with you *alway*"—to be understood? Having made them understand that he was soon to leave them and go to his Father, the Saviour now proceeds to invest them with their great commission, saying, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you"; and then adds, "Lo, I am with you *alway*, even unto the end of the world." With them in the plenitude of that "*power*" "*in earth and in heaven*" which was given him of his Father. With them in entire responsibility for their message, and the results of the faithful prosecution of their commission. With them "*alway*." He would not change his

plan, nor revoke their commission, nor nullify their ministry. He would not withhold nor recall the promised "Comforter," but would send "the Spirit of truth," who should thoroughly furnish them with all needed wisdom and grace. The real sense is, we think, that he—Christ—would be with his disciples in the full meaning and force of the commission with which he was clothing them. They were to fulfill their ministry in virtue of his divine authority.

The apostles never claimed that Jesus was with them in any personal or mystic sense after his ascension, but always spoke of him as being above, "at the right hand of the Majesty on high"; where he is to remain, as Intercessor or Advocate, "until the times of restitution of all things." But they did claim that the promised "Comforter"—the "other Comforter"—had come and would remain with them and all Christ's servants and people until "the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

1 Thess. 4: 16-18.

We feel sure that a careful study of the Holy Word will convince any unbiased mind that two—not ten thousand, but two—and only two comings of the Lord are predicted. The first is long since passed. The *second* is imminent. The first was preparatory to the objects of the *second*. The sec-

ond will be in consummation of all the grand, divine purposes of redeeming love. "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment; so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." Heb. 9: 28.

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## CHAPTER II.

### THE SCRIPTURAL PROMINENCE OF THE SECOND ADVENT.

From amid the earliest revealed truths brightly gleams the doctrine of the Second Advent. Through all the earthly ages shines the Messianic light, melting away into the glory of the second personal coming and final kingship over our *ransomed* world.

In full view of the faded splendors of Eden were written these wonderful words—words that baffled angelic insight: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy *head*, and thou shalt bruise his *heel*." Gen. 3: 15. As the ages wore on, this utterance—mystic at first—grew luminous, and developed into far-reaching and august significance. The second clause—"Thou shalt bruise his *heel*"—reached its fulfillment amid the tragic scenes of the cross, in the bruising and death of the Son of God, when Satan achieved an apparent victory and held high jubilee in brief triumph; and, being robbed of his victim by the glorious resurrection of Jesus from the dead, he has found relief in worrying and

*bruising* the "*heel*" of the followers of the victorious Lamb. The first clause—"It shall bruise his *head*"—remains to be fulfilled when, at his Second Advent, the Seed of the woman shall "destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." Heb. 2: 14.

Enoch, the seventh from Adam, caught a glimpse of the (then) far-off glory of the Second Advent, and voiced his rapture in this majestic strain: "Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him." Jude 14, 15.

This tremendous prediction cannot have been fulfilled, for "judgment" has not yet been administered, and "ungodly sinners" still—and never more than now—utter their "hard speeches against" the Lord's Anointed. These solemn words of Enoch, breaking on us from the infancy of the world, will find appalling verification "when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be *punished*—not converted—with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall *COME* to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe." 2 Thess. 1: 7-10.

Across a grave covered with the moss of four

millenniums rings grand and clear the voice of the Seer of Uz. Through the mists of that early time he saw, with no uncertain vision, the far-away scepter and throne of the "Seed of the woman." To his enchanting view, in the end of the mortal ages his Redeemer stood a second time on *earth*; and at his presence the tomb gave up its tenants, and death itself fled far away. How his thrilling words disclose the second coming! "Oh that my words were now written! oh that they were printed in a book! that they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever! For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God; whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me." Job 19: 23-27.

Midway earth's long and gloomy night the Psalmist's harp poured its loftiest and sweetest measures to the glory of "Restitution" times, predicted by "all the holy prophets," when he who is now at "the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens" shall come to our world once more—as "Lord of lords and King of kings." How grand his conception! How exalting his strains! "Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all the earth: make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise. Sing unto the Lord with the harp; with the harp, and the voice of a psalm. With trumpets and sound of cornet make a loud noise before the Lord, the King. Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof; the world,

and they that dwell therein. Let the floods clap their hands: let the hills be joyful together before the Lord: for he cometh to judge the earth; with righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with equity." Ps. 98: 4-9. This does not describe the first advent. The crimson shades of Calvary are not in this gay picture. This is the music of the New Creation scenes—the song of the Second coming.

The rapturous prophet Isaiah foresaw the grandeur that mark the final hours of earthly history. The great "Indignation" that shall dissolve thrones and blot out empires; the final punishment of the ungodly as by a blast of the divine fury; the convulsions of our sin-stricken earth, that shall disclose her blood and uncover her slain, and the hiding of saints in the chambers of God, stood out in awful distinctness as transpiring at the coming of the Lord. His words bring heaven and earth together. His vision grasps the majesty of the coming One. Let us look at what he saw: "Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee; hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. For, behold, the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity; the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain." Isa. 26: 20, 21. Surely these must be last-day scenes; for the earth has not yet "disclosed her blood," and her myriad slain are not uncovered. The prophet's glass swept the whole field of time and rested, in the words we

have quoted, on the coming of Christ the "second time without a sin-offering unto salvation."

And then the "greatly beloved" prophet Daniel, standing between Isaiah and Christ and nearer last-day scenes, saw the fall of the last great prophetic empire at the standing up of Michael the great Prince, followed by the final, universal and unparalleled time of trouble; at the beginning of which every one that is written in the book shall be delivered, and the multitudinous host who sleep in the vast hadean valley shall awake. But why should we attempt to transcribe the inimitable grandeur of the last mighty struggle of the unsaved nations against the scepter of the Prince of peace, as it passed in awful review before the prophet's eyes? Let *him* speak, and we will be silent before the burning majesty of his divinely inspired words: "I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him; thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened." Dan. 7: 9, 10.

"And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be

delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." Dan. 12: 1-3.

No one will deny that what Daniel saw was the winding up of human affairs and the opening of eternal scenes, inaugurated by the standing up of Michael, or the "coming of the Son of man." For these prophetic descriptions have never been realized in any of their striking aspects.

Are not these hasty and partial references to Old Testament recognition of the Second Coming of Christ sufficient to silence forever the charge that Second Adventism is a "modern doctrine, the out-growth of a low and fanatical pietism"? Is not the prominence of the Second Advent in the Old Testament Scriptures even fully established in the striking fact that, of the forty-six prophets from Enoch to the Revelator St. John, less than **TEN** predicted Christ's first coming, and that with allusions, also, to his second coming; while not less than **THIRTY-SIX** explicitly predicted his second coming?

Thus it is clearly seen that the doctrine of the Second Advent is as old as the Bible; shining out from the borders of our lost Paradise; taking foremost rank among the earliest revelations of God to men; distinctly traceable from the first to the last chapters of the Old Testament Scriptures; so

that an inspired apostle could say, "And he shall send Jesus Christ; which before was preached unto you, whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." Acts 3: 20, 21.

Why should a doctrine so clearly and grandly revealed be regarded with doubt and disdain? Why should Christendom build on the first coming predicted by a few prophets, and reject the second coming predicted with greater explicitness by "all the holy prophets since the world began"? How can the first coming of Jesus avail in the accomplishment of its gracious purposes if the second coming of the Lord in resurrection *power* never occurs? Why should any one attempt to obscure the glorious light of the second coming, which is the guiding star from Paradise lost to Paradise regained? The great prominence given to this doctrine in the Scriptures suggests its importance in the mind of God, and should command the profound attention of all believers in inspired revelation.

Having shown that the second coming of Christ was clearly discerned and explicitly predicted by nearly all the Old Testament prophets, fully justifying the strong statement of Sir Isaac Newton that, "There is scarcely a prophecy of the Old Testament which does not in something or other relate to the second coming of Christ," we now turn our attention to the recognition of this great doctrine by the New Testament writers.

From the first chapter of Matthew to the last

words of the Revelation, the New Scriptures are aglow with the beauty and glory of the "appearing and kingdom." Says the Rev. David Brown, of Glasgow, Scotland: "We affirm that the Redeemer's second appearing is the very polar-star of the church. That it is so held in the New Testament is beyond dispute." And Bishop Henshaw has well remarked that, "The apostles never failed to give point and pungency to their warnings and exhortations by solemn reference to the certainty and suddenness of the Lord's coming."

If the Old Testament opened under the dim and mystic gleamings of the final coming and kingly reign of the Seed of the woman, at the end of the mortal ages; the New Testament opens in the blazing splendor of the Messianic manifestation, to be succeeded by the second advent, which will finish and crown the redemptive plan and fill our ransomed world with the glory of God.

As if to stamp the great promise with supernatural authority and grandeur, a messenger directly from the high court of Heaven was charged with its first announcement, in the following wonderful words: "And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary; for thou hast found favor with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David; and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." Luke 1: 30-33.

This angelic prophecy was but partially fulfilled in the first advent. Many of its grandest aspects sweep on to the final appearing, and find their realization in the majestic triumphs and universal glory of the second coming. The Saviour was not "great," in the sense of the text, when he was cradled in a manger, or when he went about serving the sick and distressed, pensively saying as he journeyed, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." He was not "great" when he stood undefended and without a single follower in the presence of his murderous accusers. He was not "great" in the regal sense of this angelic prediction, when he bowed his head to receive the crown of thorns; nor was he "great" when he was led out of Jerusalem, followed by a howling mob, to the place of ignominious suffering. The angel's promise to the virgin mother—"He shall be great"—seemed a ghastly mockery as he hung pale and pulseless on the hideous cross.

"The Lord God" did not give him "the throne of his father David" at the first advent, but left him to be smitten, stricken by inexorable justice, as the bearer of the world's guilt. The accursed tree, draped with extremest ignominy, streaming with the blood of its execrated victim, were a sad substitute for the great throne of the royal David.

He did not "reign over the house of Jacob" at the first coming; but death reigned over him. That pale, scarred brow was not lighted by the glory of a kingly crown, but swathed with a napkin. At

that coming his right hand grasped no scepter of a kingdom universal and unending, but quivered at the piercing nail that transfixed him to the cruel instrument of a felon's death.

This grand seraphic prophecy will find complete fulfillment in the power and glory and kingdom of the second advent; for our Lord has not yet received the kingdom and throne promised him of his Father. He is not now reigning, but *pleading* at the right hand of "the Majesty on high." He is not yet King *de facto*. The hour of his crowning has not dawned. "Dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations and languages should serve him," await his coming; but we see him not yet "upon the throne of his father David." But the angel saw him the Head of universal empire—at *his second appearing*.

Jesus himself predicted his second advent with great frequency. Being arraigned before Caiaphas, he received all their bitter accusations in silence, until the high priest adjured him by the living God to tell whether he was the Christ, the Son of God; when he answered, "Thou hast said; nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." Matt. 26: 64. This prediction has not been fulfilled, but it will be verified when Christ shall come "in the glory of his Father with his angels" to "reward every man according to his works." Matt. 16: 27.

Just before his crucifixion he said to his followers, who were sad at the prospect of his leaving

them: "Let not your heart be troubled. . . . I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will *come again*, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." John 14: 3. This promise of our Lord is not accomplished by the departure of the saints at death, to meet the Saviour in heaven above. That is not the divine order. The "bride" does not go to find the "Bridegroom," but the "Bridegroom" comes for the "bride," to take her "to himself," that where he is, there she "may be also." John 14: 3 will be fulfilled at the second coming of Christ, and not before. It is indisputably a prophecy of the second advent.

How strikingly the second coming of the Lord is brought *prominently* to view in the parable of the ten virgins. Matt. 25: 1-13. Will any one claim that the Bridegroom has come? If so, the "Marriage of the Lamb" has transpired, and the "*door is shut*." But if the "marriage" has not yet occurred, and the "door" is still open, then our Lord has not yet come. The force and solemnity of this parable are centered in the second advent. Separate it from that event and it becomes an enigma.

And so in the parable of the nobleman. Who dares say that our Nobleman has returned? Have the "servants" been reckoned with? Are we past the judgment? How prominently and solemnly our Lord brings forward and presses upon the attention of his people the certainty of his return, after a long absence. Since the Lord Jesus himself has given such grand and imposing distinction to the doctrine

of his second coming, who shall presume to force it to the background, or seek to obscure its awful significance? Who will take the *role* of "that evil servant" and "say in his heart, My Lord delayeth his coming"? When the Master has crowned a doctrine, who shall discrown it?

Turning to the broad and luxuriant field of the *epistolary* writings, we find the doctrine of the second advent everywhere enthroned. Now the apostles drew all their doctrines from the teachings of the Saviour; and the frequency and emphasis with which they refer to and insist upon the expectation of their Lord's return, show how deeply they had been impressed with it by the words which they had heard from his own lips. Paul, Peter, James, Jude and John perpetually speak of the second coming of Christ in great variety of statement and illustration; urging every consideration of duty, fidelity, hope, unity and love by constant appeal to the "coming of the Lord." And they all taught this doctrine as the only foundation for the hope of eternal life. They describe the church as "waiting for the Son of God from heaven." And Paul makes the "*loving*" of his appearing the condition of receiving a crown of glory. When sinners are urged to repent, the coming of the Lord and what it implies is made the chief motive. Acts 3: 19, 20. Is the church urged to patience in the midst of fiery trials? It is because "the coming of the Lord draweth nigh." Jas. 5: 7. When the great apostle gives a solemn *charge* to a young preacher, it is in these words: "I charge thee therefore before God, and

the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his *appearing* and kingdom." 2 Tim. 4: 1. And entire consecration and blamelessness among saints are set home by reference to the second coming of Christ. 1 Thess. 5: 23.

In the apostolic estimation, the second advent is not only worthy of the most cordial belief, but is an event devoutly to be desired, ardently to be anticipated, as in St. Peter's ringing words: "Looking for and hastening unto the *coming* of the day of God." 2 Pet. 3: 12. And Paul deemed the *remembrance* of the Saviour's promised return of so much importance that he connected it with the commemoration of the Lord's Supper: "For as oft as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death *till he come*." 1 Cor. 11: 26. But why should we multiply examples of a doctrine that pervades the entire apostolic writings and constitutes the chief beauty and glory of the New Testament Scriptures? A doctrine so central to the redemptive economy that to blot it out would be like extinguishing the sun in the heavens. A great truth around which all the hopes of the church are grouped. The grand event which shall justify the discernment of the prophets, crown the devotion of the martyrs, vindicate the faith of the church, bring immortality to all the ransomed, and invest the Son of God with well deserved power and glory universal. And the last of the sacred books is in harmony with all the other sacred writers.

Over all the pages of the Revelation glows the radiance of the second advent, bright and beautiful

as the glory of heaven. Through the first chapter breaks the mighty acclaim: "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him"; to which the last words of the book, and the closing note of the Sacred Canon in grand responsive strains make answer: "Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

Bengel says: "In this book all the other books of the Bible end and meet." And this is pre-eminently the book of the second advent. The *revelation* of Christ and his kingdom, and the events preparatory to the grand Epiphany. And so the Messianic light that struggled dimly through the earliest revelations given to man, traversing the ages, and gathering brightness as the centuries succeed each other, in the Spirit's last words to the church breaks forth in the full-orbed resplendence of the *coming* and kingship of our now absent but soon expected Jesus the Christ.

"Lo, he comes, with clouds descending,  
Once for favored sinners slain;  
Thousand, thousand saints attending,  
Swell the triumph of his train.  
Hallelujah!  
Jesus comes on earth to reign."

### CHAPTER III.

#### THE SECOND ADVENT PERSONAL AND VISIBLE.

Of the vast range of biblical topics, none is more important than the *manner* of our Lord's second coming; for the certainty and character of many of the grandest events of Revelation must be determined by the nature of the second appearing.

There are two methods of interpretation, technically called the literal and the figurative. By literal interpretation is meant that the text of the Scriptures is always to be understood according to the letter, or obvious meaning of the words, in the natural and literal sense; except in cases where the literal sense would involve an absurdity, and where the context clearly shows that the writer intended to be understood figuratively. The figurative method of interpretation is just the opposite of the literal. It holds that the real words are but an outward form within which a mystical sense is concealed, and that the literal meaning is not to be taken, but the *veiled* or hidden sense is to be sought for and accepted.

Of the school of spiritualistic or figurative interpreters, ORIGEN, who lived and wrote in the early part of the third century, is the father; of whom Bishop Pearce, Dr. Whitby and many others are little more than copyists. The allegorical method of interpretation was entirely unknown to the Christian Church during the first two centuries.

Luther said: "That which I have often insisted

on elsewhere I here once more repeat, viz.: that the Christian should direct his first efforts towards understanding the *literal sense* of Scripture, which alone is the substance of faith and of Christian theology. . . . The allegorical sense is commonly uncertain and by no means safe to build our faith upon; for it usually depends on human opinion and conjecture only, on which if a man lean he will find it no better than the Egyptian reed. Therefore Origen, Jerome, and similar of the fathers are to be avoided. . . . For later writers unhappily following their example, it has come to pass that men make just what they please of the Scriptures, until some accommodate the Word of God to the most extravagant absurdities."

Says the learned Vitringa: "We must never depart from the *literal meaning* of the subject mentioned in its own appropriate name, if all its principal attributes square with the subject of the prophecy." And Bishop Jeremy Taylor forcibly remarks, that "In all the interpretations of Scripture the *literal sense* is to be *presumed* and chosen unless there be evident cause to the contrary." To which we beg to add the well chosen words of Rosenmuller: "All ingenuous and unprejudiced persons will grant me this position, that there is no method of removing difficulties more secure than that of an accurate interpretation derived from the words of the texts themselves and from their true and legitimate meaning, and depending upon no hypothesis."

The school of figurative interpreters hold and teach that all the predictions of the second coming

of Christ are to be understood in a spiritual, providential or judicial sense; and that Christ has come already many times and in a great variety of manner; notably at the setting up of the Christian Church; and again in the overthrow of Paganism and the establishment of Christianity in the Roman empire by Constantine in the beginning of the third century; but more especially in the judgments of God upon the Jews and the destruction of their city in A. D. 70. And in the last named event such writers as Bishop Pearce, Dr. Adam Clarke, Dr. Scott, Dr. Benson, Rev. Albert Barnes, Dr. Whitby, and many others, claim to find a fulfillment of Matt. 24: 27 to 30. And they deny that this passage has any reference to a personal coming of Christ. Let our Lord's words be carefully read: "For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together. Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken; and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory; and he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."

To all this we reply that such license of figurative

interpretation as is assumed by these writers in the application of this scripture to the destruction of the Jewish nation and polity, if applied to all similar cases, would resolve the entire Bible into a figure of speech; destroying the literalness of the first advent, and the resurrection of Christ from the dead; leaving the world without a Saviour, waiting—as the Jew says—for the promised Messiah. For very few predictions of the first advent are plainer than this prophecy of the second coming.

Can we bring ourselves to believe that the brightness and suddenness of our Lord's promised return, so grandly and repeatedly predicted, means no more than the rapidity of the march of a Roman army? And that the "*sign of the Son of man in heaven*" at which all the "*tribes of the earth shall wail*" is nothing but the Roman ensign seen in the distance by the insolent Jew? And that the "*wailing of all the tribes of the earth*" was the defiant murmur of beleaguered Jerusalem? Are we to believe that the "*coming of the Son of man in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory*" was realized in the advance of the dissolute and godless hordes of Roman soldiery, thirsting for Jewish blood? Would the divine Christ so represent the royalty and kingly splendor of his triumphal return to our world? Was the savage brutality of the blasphemous Roman guards a fitting "*figure of the "power and glory of the Son of God"*"?

But let us repeat the Saviour's words: "And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet,

and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."

Would Jesus liken his holy angels—the pure and shining seraphs who have stood before the heavenly throne through the measureless ages of the old eternity, waiting to fly on joyous wing to do his high behest—would the Christ, whose birth they sang under the midnight stars on the Judean hills, liken those pure and splendid creatures to the rough, unfeeling soldiers of a Roman battalion? Would not every loyal angel in heaven resent the comparison?

Besides, God's "elect" were not "gathered together from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other" when Jerusalem fell under the spears of insatiate Rome. To say that he "that was dead but is alive forevermore, and hath the keys of death and hell"; he that is to come as "King of kings and Lord of lords" made his second advent in the event of Jerusalem's downfall, is to insult the dignity and divinity of his person, and change his regal glory into a cloud of smoke. But there are many other scriptures which relate to the *manner* of Christ's second coming. Let us compare a few of them with the assumed "figurative" interpretation of the 24th of Matthew. For the inspired writers do not contradict the Master, nor themselves. And there can be but one correct view of the manner and purposes of our Lord's descent again from heaven to earth.

Before the blessed Lord left the scenes of his brief but strangely interesting earthly ministry to go

to his mediatorial throne and work, he comforted his disheartened disciples with the glorious assurance that his separation from them would not be forever, but that they should see his face and hear his voice again and be with him in his everlasting mansions. His words were tender and inspiring. And thus he breathed on them the fervor of his love and the assurance of his devotion: "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." John 14:3. Did this occur when the streets of the royal city ran down with Hebrew blood under the Roman spear? Did Jesus come and take his disciples to himself at the destruction of Jerusalem? Paul had slept on his martyr's shield full two years before the royal city was destroyed. Did he rise from the dead and go to his Lord when the shout of Roman victory rang across Jerusalem's bloody desolations? To say he went to the presence of his Lord at death, is to spoil the "figurative" interpretation, for in that case he had been with Christ two years before Jerusalem's fall.

St. John was alive when Titus conquered the Jews and destroyed their city. Did Jesus translate him at that event and "take him to himself"? Then is the Revelation indeed a spurious book, for John was not banished to Patmos till years after Jerusalem's downfall. There is no doubt that the "beloved disciple" sleeps till this hour in his quiet Ephesus grave where his loving flock tenderly laid him to rest when his long ministry was done, from whence the voice of his descending Lord will call him, at his "coming and kingdom."

Let us try another interesting text by the rule of *figurative* interpretation, which maintains that Christ came at the destruction of Jerusalem. "For the Lord *himself* shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first." 1 Thess. 4: 16.

Did the dead arise when Jerusalem fell? Did Abraham and Sarah and Isaac come forth from their long repose in Machpelah at the blast of the Roman bugle? Did Job awake from his death slumber of three millenniums at the shriek of the Roman eagle? Did Rachel's long lost children, for whom the bitter tears have flowed through many a weary century, come to their own borders when Jerusalem was "laid on heaps"? Did the vast *hadean* valley vibrate to the clash of arms when Roman sword smote Jewish shield, and give back to life its myriad dead?

How absurd is the system of figurative interpretation when applied to the second coming of Christ. For if Jesus made his second appearance in our world when Jerusalem was overthrown, then the resurrection must have occurred at the time of that event; and that would necessitate another coming and another resurrection for the multitudes mown down by the insatiable destroyer since that hour.

Of the very many scriptures that crowd to the front showing the inconsistency and absurdity of *allegorical* interpretation we quote but one more. In Phil. 3: 20, 21, it is written: "For our conversion is in heaven; from whence also we look for

the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body."

This text means that when Jesus comes again from heaven the saints will be translated. It can mean nothing else. Was that terrible Jerusalem siege, when starvation held ghastly carnival within her gates, and her conduits were choked with the gore of a million of her people—was that translation day to saints? What saints there were did not ascend to heaven, but fled to the "hills round about Jerusalem" for safety. Alas for us! Translation's hour has not yet dawned, because our Lord has not yet returned. But when He whom having not seen we love shall come in power and great glory, announced by all the voices of the skies and attended by all the shining throngs of heaven, then will the royal dead awake with shouts of joy on their glowing lips, and immortal symphonies in their myriad blending voices; and then shall all the living saints, thrilled by the touch of re-creating energy divine, feel flowing through their sluggish veins the healthy currents of eternal youth. For "we know that when He shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is."

We have already shown that the second coming of Christ is as specifically revealed in the Old Testament as in the New Testament; to which we wish now to add that the language applied by the Old Testament writers to the second coming is as *literalistic* as that applied to the first coming; and, therefore, the discrimination which accepts the Old Tes-

tament predictions of the first advent in their literal sense, but spiritualizes the predictions which relate to the second advent, does violence to the recognized laws of language, and subjects the Sacred Scriptures to a license of interpretation fatal to the integrity of their inspired significance. Let us illustrate by a passage from Job: "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me." Job 19: 25-27.

Will any deny that Job's declaration—"For I know that my Redeemer liveth," was true in the really personal sense? Can Job's words imply less than the existence of a personal Redeemer? This being admitted, by what law of language can the concluding words of the sentence—"And that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth," be spiritualized? By the phrase "latter day," Job must have meant the time of Christ's second advent, for he associates it with the period of his own resurrection when in his "*flesh*" he shall "see God"; and the resurrection is everywhere in the Scriptures represented as occurring at the second advent.

With this single illustration out of many that might be adduced from the Old Testament scriptures, let us turn our attention to the New Testament.

To the disciples, sorrow-stricken in view of his departure, the Saviour said: "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive

you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." John 14: 3. Now that Jesus went away personally and literally none will deny; that is a simple historic fact. Who can point out any law of language by which Jesus can be made to speak literally when he says, "If I go away," but figuratively when, in the *same breath*, and under precisely the same circumstances, he says, "I will come again"? Such an interpretation seems to us an inexcusable tampering with the Inspired Record.

And in Luke 12: 43, our Lord, in contrasting the conduct of the good and evil servant, says: "Blessed is that servant whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing." This text implies the personal appearing and presence of the Master to reckon with his servants when their work was finished, and not any spiritual blessing while discharging their trusts.

St. Paul surely expected a personal coming to occur subsequently to his own time. To the Thessalonian church he says: "For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come." 1 Thess. 1: 10. The Thessalonians had already turned from idols and were serving the living God, and were *waiting* for the Son of God from heaven; therefore they must have been waiting for a *personal* and not a spiritual coming.

And again in 2 Thess. 1: 6-10 the apostle em-

ploys language that can hardly be misunderstood by any careful reader who really desires to know the truth touching this all-important doctrine. He says: "Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them which trouble you; and to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe."

God has not yet "recompensed tribulation" to those who trouble his church. The blood of the martyrs still cries for avenging judgment against Nero, against the bloody Inquisition, against Rome, against the beast and the false prophet, against all who have crimsoned their hands in the blood of saints. The wicked have not yet been "punished with everlasting destruction," nor has the church been "recompensed" with "rest." But all this waits to be fulfilled "when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels," and "when he shall come to be glorified in his saints." Now the coming predicted in this text must be personal and literal, or the "*tribulation*" which is to be recompensed to the troublers of God's people must be figurative and not real. Shall we, in order to get rid of the doctrine of Christ's second personal coming, reduce God's punishment of

all the wicked of the ages to a figure of speech? Into what appalling inconsistencies have modern interpreters been betrayed in their efforts to expunge from God's Word the glorious promise of our Lord's second personal advent, which is the last hope of the church.

How perfectly in accord with St. Paul's conception are the revelations given to St. John. Hear his sublime exclamation: "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen." Rev. 1: 7. If Christ's second coming is to be impersonal and invisible, how can "every eye see him"? If his coming is only figurative, what occasion will there be for "all the kindreds of the earth to wail because of him"? Little will "they also which pierced him" care for an allegorical coming of Christ, which they cannot see, and therefore cannot know. Slight will be the "wailing" if the awful judgment scenes connected with the second advent, throughout the Scriptures, shall end in a figure of rhetoric. Is it not time for theological trifling with the solemn statements of Christ and all apostles to cease?

Another scripture occurs to us which so explicitly and forcibly proves the second coming of our Lord to be personal, that we beg to urge it upon the reader's special attention. "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout,

with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

1 Thess. 4: 15-18.

The great apostle, in this text, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, predicts a descent of the Lord himself from heaven which will produce the resurrection of the dead. This cannot be a spiritual resurrection at conversion, for at the same time the living saints are to be translated. And the divine affirmation is that the Lord—not a Roman army, not some great providence, not a judgment, but the LORD, will descend from heaven. The Lord himself; not his Spirit, not his gospel, but HIMSELF. Now if Paul's statement, as positively and explicitly made as it is possible for a proposition to be expressed in human language, is to be taken, then the second coming of Christ *must* be *personal* and *visible*. It would seem incredible that any one of ordinary intelligence should have any doubt as to the meaning of this scripture.

We will trouble the reader with but one text more—a text so conclusive of the *manner* of Christ's advent as to render any further evidences unnecessary. The saddened disciples were thrilled to ecstasy at the appearing in their midst of the resurrected Jesus. The joy seemed too great to be real. Their poor hearts quivered between gladness and fear, when the Saviour assured them it was no illusion

but a grand reality, and at once demonstrated to their physical senses that he was *not* a spirit, but an actual living, literal, flesh and bones personality. And these were his wonderful words: "And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. And when he had thus spoken, he showed them his hands and his feet. And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat? And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of a honeycomb. And he took it, and did eat before them." Luke 24: 36-43.

As they gazed enraptured on his recognized form—"scarred, but glorious"—and listened to the familiar tones of his inspiring voice, the mists lifted from their bewildered minds, and their happiness was complete. But their bliss was brief, for after repeating his promise to send the Holy Spirit to them, he led them out as far as Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them. And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven." Luke 24: 50-52. And now their fresh-born hopes are dashed to the ground, and, bewildered and saddened more than ever, they stand awe-struck, gazing at the ascending form of their beloved Master and Lord

when suddenly two shining messengers from the heavenly court emerged from amid the shadows and said: "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." Acts 1:11. What new and strange delight flooded their minds, and what holy joy swept their saddened hearts, they may tell us some time, amid the splendors of the restitution.

Now let us carefully consider the remarkable scriptures which we have quoted. The Saviour had demonstrated to his disciples that what they saw was no spectral form, but he *himself*—the very same Jesus, in form and feature, who hung and bled upon the cross, and who was laid by tender hands in Joseph's marble tomb. He subjected his person to the tests of their physical senses—showing them his wounded hands and feet—to convince them beyond a doubt that he had risen from the grave without the loss of a single attribute, and perfectly free from the touch of corruption. And to crown the evidences of his real, literal and identical personality, he asked for food and ate in their presence; and then, in the full gaze of all the disciples, he ascended to heaven. And as he went up, just when the clouds enfolded him from their view, the heavenly visitants revealed themselves to the disciples, and to their amazed hearts made, to them, new and wonderful revelations. Let us listen to their divinely dictated words: "This same Jesus."—*This Jesus; not another; not the Spirit; not the word*

of grace; but THIS *identical* Jesus. "This SAME Jesus." Not a changed or *transmuted* body, but precisely the same person in every physical element which he had just before presented to them, and which they had seen and handled. "Shall so come in like MANNER as ye have seen him go into heaven." Is it possible for a case to be more conclusively stated?

But if it shall still be held that Christ did not "carry our flesh with him to heaven," but that some unknown change took place in his person after he passed beyond the sight of his disciples, then it follows: First, that the disciples were fearfully and purposely deceived by the angel messengers; for it were impossible to form a more misleading statement than their words convey if Christ is not to make a second *personal* and *visible* advent. And, second, if the assurance made to the disciples was fallacious, then we have no real personal "*advocate*" at the "*right hand of God*." But if the angelic statement was truthful, then Christ is now in heaven, in the very identical body which rose from the tomb; and his return *must* be as literal and visible as his ascension; for they did "*see him go into heaven*" visibly and literally; and the angels solemnly declared that he should "*come in like manner* as they had seen him go into heaven."

Now we aver, in the name of the Lord, that the reckless license of interpretation that would dare deny that this text teaches the personal and visible return of the blessed Christ, thereby destroys every rule of exegesis by which the Holy Word can be made to teach any doctrine with sufficient definiteness to command the respect of thinking minds.

eloquence and science, we must be allowed to rest our faith in the words which are heard from Heaven, and repeated by lips touched with the fire of God.

And it fills us with joy to know that death—dark-visaged, insatiable death—is not of the Infinite Father. It neither inheres in his nature nor obtains in his purposes. The black-winged messenger, that waits at every threshold and watches every cradle, came not forth from the throne of light and love. The death element was not in the original constitution of the universe. There was no blight on man or tree or flower or wing of bird till sin came, and poisoned all. Mortality was superinduced. “Death came by sin.” “An enemy hath done this.”

Death is an enemy, only an enemy, always an enemy; an enemy alike to nature, man and God. Garland the grave as we will with poetry and flowers, we baptize it with scalding tears when the poetry is forgotten and the flowers are faded. We have seen many a young mother clasp her hands in anguish and send distrustful glances towards heaven as a little casket was lowered to its silent resting-place; but we never heard from her white lips, “Welcome, death; come again.” The Lord hates death, and has promised to destroy it; and the only hope of saints hangs on the fulfillment of that promise.

We assume that if there shall be any resurrection at all, it must of necessity be bodily and literal, for no other resurrection is conceivable. If any body or thing shall appear at the hour of Restitution other than the body which had lived before, and which

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE RESURRECTION.

With that fascinating charm of rhetoric which often obscures the simplicity of the truth, and enthrones the imagination rather than enlightens the intellect, our eloquent American skeptic has said: “Life is a dark valley lying between the cold peaks of two silent eternities, and death ends all.” And as a Rationalist he could have said no more. But our inspired prophet, in words equally poetic, and divinely grand, has said: “Thy dead men shall live; together with my *dead body* shall they *arise*. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs; and the earth shall cast out the dead.” Isa. 26: 19. And the divine Christ, who needed no inspiration, for he knew all things, said: “Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in their *graves* shall hear his voice, and shall come forth.” And with all deference to

fell in death, it will be a *new creation*, and not a resurrection in any proper or Biblical sense. God might, if it please him, substitute some other form for that of the dead saint, but it could not be called a *resurrection* body. All the terms employed by the inspired writers as applied to the nature of the resurrection at the last day imply *reviviscence*, *re-living*, or restoring to life that which had ceased to live; and never a new creation. To say that "saints get their resurrection at death," in the flight of the soul away from the body into an ethereal heaven, is to speak *absurdly*.

It is objected that the doctrine of the resurrection is not traceable in the Old Testament Scriptures. Let us see. The promise of the re-living—of life after death—followed closely upon the death penalty. The first dim ray of hope that gleamed on the dark night of our world's ruin was the divine intimation of resurrection. The germ of reviviscence is in the first word of promise made to lost man—"The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head." Death came of sin, and sin is of the devil; and so that earliest pledge of hope, traversing the ages, finds triumphant response in apostolic assurance "that through death he—Christ, the Seed of the woman—might destroy him that hath the power of death, that is, the devil; and *deliver* them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." Heb. 2: 14, 15. The Seed of the woman will bruise the serpent's head, by "*delivering*" all the victims of death, annulling Satan's power of death, and annihilating Satan himself; and this he

will do in and through his (Christ's) resurrection power.

Over the grave of Job in clear and heavenly brightness shines the *star of resurrection* hope. His faith sweeps the wastes of distant ages and grasps the splendors of resurrection glory. He triumphs over approaching and inexorable death by the assurance that though "worms" may "destroy his body," yet in his "*flesh*" he "shall see God." His words are afame with resurrection certainty and beauty: "Oh that my words were now written! oh that they were printed in a book! that they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock forever! For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God; whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me." Job 19: 23-27.

Job had suffered intensely both as regarded his mind and his body; and despairing of justice in his lifetime he desired to put on record in the most enduring way possible his certain expectation of being vindicated at the *resurrection* of the just. His body had chiefly suffered, and only by the resurrection of his body, and seeing God in his "*flesh*," with his "*own eyes*," in a renovated and perfect resurrection body, could his character and person be vindicated. And this hope he drew from the promise made to Adam in the garden. It has been shown that the fall through the temptation of the serpent

is perfectly represented on the Temple of Osiris at Phylæ; and the resurrection on the tomb of the Egyptian Mycerinus, dating back 4000 years.

And Abraham, when baffled by God's command to sacrifice his only son, considered in the light of the promise previously made that his seed should be innumerable, fell back on the belief that God would raise Isaac from the dead. Whence did Abraham derive his resurrection faith? Doubtless from the Edenic promise, made clear by the Spirit's light.

And what could Isaiah have meant in the following words? "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead." The expressions "dead men," "my dead body," "they that dwell in dust," and "the earth shall cast out the dead," prove as strongly as it is possible for language to prove that the prophet believed in a literal and bodily resurrection of dead men. For surely a substituted spiritual body cannot be a "dead body," and the "earth" cannot "cast out the dead" that were never in the earth. To say that language so absolutely literal in its structure and natural significance is to be understood allegorically would resolve the Bible into a mass of mysticism.

And Hosea is quite as explicit in his statement of resurrection hope as Job and Isaiah. "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction." How can the

saints be "ransomed from the power of the grave" if they never come out of the grave? In what sense can they be "redeemed from death" if death forever holds them prisoners? How can death be "plagued" if it reigns undisturbed over the bodies of men? Slight indeed must be the "destruction" of the grave that leaves it in eternal possession of its tenant. If Hosea was alive at this hour and desired to meet the skepticism of modern theology, touching the resurrection of the dead, by avowing his positive belief in the doctrine of personal and bodily re-living of dead men, he could not possibly frame a declaration more compact, explicit and decisive than the words we have quoted. But the views set forth by Abraham, Job, Isaiah and Hosea are not merely the opinions of those men, but they are the sentiments which the Holy Ghost inspired in their minds, and influenced them to write; and they are to be accepted as the thought and purpose of God.

Would the divine Spirit dictate to the inspired writers the use of language so certainly misguiding as the scriptures quoted must be, if there is to be no real resurrection of the dead? Is it not rational to suppose that the wise and faithful Lord would have the amanuensis whom he employs to write doctrines for his people which are to be the authority of their faith and practice through all the human ages, and their only hope of eternal salvation—would he not have them use terms which naturally and properly describe the things and events of which they write? How then could these ancient men of God have used the words we have quoted

if no such event as a bodily resurrection of the dead is ever to occur? We are glad to believe, reverently, implicitly and joyfully in a doctrine so grand and glorious, and so plainly and certainly revealed.

That the Jews believed in a literal resurrection cannot be denied. Dr. Bush, in writing against the doctrine, frankly admitted that "the Jews devoutly believed in the resurrection of the *body*," and that "they clung to that hope in all their misfortunes." And the Rabbinical writers abound in expressions of belief in the re-living of saints. They constantly refer to Dan. 12: 2 as teaching a corporeal resurrection. In commenting upon Gen. 17: 8—"And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the *land* wherein thou art a stranger, *all the land of Canaan*, for an *everlasting* possession; and I will be their God"—Manasseh Ben Israel says: "It is plain that Abram and the patriarchs did not possess the land; it follows therefore that they must be *raised* from the dead in order to enjoy the promised good, as otherwise the promise of God would be vain and false. Hence is proved the *essential foundation* of the Law, to wit, the resurrection of the dead."

When Jesus stood over that fresh-made Bethany grave, and in the fulness of his tender, divine sympathy sought to comfort the sorrow-stricken sisters by the assurance that their brother should live again, Martha, in her anguish partly lightened by a remote hope, said: "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection, at the last day." Whence

had Martha derived the belief of a last-day resurrection? Martha was a Jewish woman, and she had drunk in that doctrine from her Jewish religion; it had been taught her at the knee of her Jewish mother. It was a chief doctrine in the Hebrew faith.

St. Paul was a Jew, and nearly all his trouble, persecution and final martyr's death came upon him in consequence of persistently preaching "Christ and the resurrection." And so this "blessed hope" of life after death is no modern heresy. It was the ancient belief, the Old Testament teaching, the faith of Abraham, Job, Isaiah, Daniel, Hosea, David, and all the worthies who believed God and looked for immortality through the resurrection of the dead; who "all died in faith, not having received the promises," but expecting victory over death and the grave through the promised Seed of the woman, and an inheritance in a "*country*" of fadeless bloom and beauty, and a city of foundations which shall not be swept away by revolution or wasted by the eternal ages. And to this faith of the ancient fathers, with all the force of clear and certain conception, and with the glad emphasis of every element and fibre of our being, we add an eternal *Amen*; believing with Christian Evans, that "the songs of these bursting sepulchres, when Christ shall come, will be sweeter than the song of the morning stars."

## CHAPTER V.

### THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD AS REVEALED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

In the early Christian periods the hope and joy of God's people centered in the expected resurrection of the dead, at the second advent of Christ. Death was regarded as the great universal enemy, and the divinely promised re-living of its victims as the only hope of deliverance. The resurrection of the body was held and taught as the key doctrine of the redemptive economy. Belief in the reviviscence of the dead race at the sounding of the "last trump" was the dividing line between Christian and unchristian mind. St. Paul makes the resurrection an *elemental* doctrine, even a foundation principle of all gospel teaching.

But in these times of skeptical theology the order of belief is strangely reversed. The beautiful hope of resurrection is discarded, banished, ridiculed; and death—grim, hateful death, is idealized into an angel of blessing. "O how beautiful is death, seeing we die into a world of life!" says RITCHER. And in a strange paradox YOUNG sings:

"The king of terrors is the prince of peace."

This is, as a forcible writer has said, "making the capital curse of God eclipse the capital promise

of God." As though the stern and awful penalty for sin has resolved itself into the poetic bliss of dying. To advocate literal resurrection now, is to be denounced as materialistic, unphilosophical, uninformed in the latest methods of scientific thought. Nevertheless we must be allowed to adhere to the ancient faith and doctrine of literal resurrection—the re-living of the bodies of the dead. And having shown, we think, in a former article that this doctrine is clearly taught in the Old Testament Scriptures, we now direct our inquiries to the teaching of the New Testament.

Forerunning and foreshadowing the great event of Christ's resurrection was a cluster of *preliminary* resurrections. The Saviour, in setting forth to the Jews the divine power vested in him, and his purpose to exercise it, said: "For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will." John 5: 21. And again (John 5: 25): "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and *now is*, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall *live*." And still further (John 5: 28): "Marvel not at this: for the hour is *coming*, in the which *all* that are in their graves shall hear *his* voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."

Thus the Redeemer asserted his *power* and his *purpose* to raise the dead—all the dead. And to show the Jews and all peoples what he meant by the dead "coming forth" at his call, he proceeded,

at different times, to raise to life Jairus' daughter, the widow's son, and Lazarus.

The death slumber of the Ruler's little daughter was very brief. Scarcely had the cruel enemy completed his vengeful work; scarcely had the currents of her young life ceased their course, congealed by the icy touch of the black-winged angel, when He who hath power over death and the tomb was at the side of the young sleeper, and taking her cold white hand in his he said, "Maid, arise!" and "she arose straightway, and walked."

And lest that touching exhibition of Christ's power over death, so radiant with the rich sympathy of his perfect human nature, should still be "laughed to scorn," and it still be said she was not dead, he again demonstrated his resurrection power in a manner as touchingly beautiful as before, in raising to life the widow's dead son while on the way to burial. Purposely meeting that most humble funeral train as it came slowly out through the gates of Nain, with but a single mourner, he said in tones of heavenly sweetness, "Weep not," and touching the bier he commanded the manly form, beautiful in death, to "*arise*," and "he that was dead sat up and began to speak." But the fruitful ingenuity of skeptical criticism will say, "It was only a case of suspended animation, taken advantage of by Christ to make a show of power."

But the evidence is cumulative. A little later the Son of God stood beside a green grave at Bethany. The silent sleeper had been four days buried. Decomposition had commenced its loathsome work.

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Even the heart-stricken sisters interposed that it was too late; corruption had set in. Here is no room for cavil. Nothing but divine power could reach this case. Standing at the grave, Jesus cried, "*Lazarus, come forth.*" "And he that was *dead*, came forth."

There is grand significance in these resurrection scenes. That this was done in profound and blessed sympathy for the bereaved is clear. But Christ must have had another and broader purpose. He would thus demonstrate his power over death and the grave, and *manifest* one of the grandest elements in his redemptive work—the resurrection of the dead, at his coming; for he coupled with that present display of his power the declaration, "For the hour is coming, in the which *all* that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth." These resurrections were preliminary to Christ's, as his was to the resurrection of "*all who are in their graves*"—a kind of prelude to the grand outburst of resurrection splendor and glory at the last day.

Moreover there were *confirmatory* resurrections. "Jesus, when he had cried with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost." "And the graves were opened, and many *bodies* of the saints which slept *arose* and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many." Matt. 27: 50, 52, 53.

Now the resurrection of that company of Old Testament saints was not merely an attestation of Christ's rising from the dead, but was also an evidence of the re-living of all the saints, through

Christ, at his coming ; for showing themselves alive in "the holy city" would constitute no positive proof that Christ had arisen, but it would show that they were a kind of first fruits of a general resurrection of all men.

Could they who witnessed those resurrections, especially those that followed Christ's coming forth out of the tomb, have failed to be profoundly impressed, and confirmed in the belief of the resurrection of dead bodies as a chief element in the redemption which the Saviour came to achieve? And can we believe that our Lord would have exercised his power over death and the grave to so great an extent, if there is to be no such an event as the general resurrection of the dead?

The "saints" who came out of their graves after Christ had risen were, doubtless, persons well known in Jerusalem. Probably Simeon, Zacharias and John the Baptist were among the number.

We are often asked if the sleeping saints who awoke and arose from death were resurrected to immortality, or left to die again? On this interesting point the gospel narrative is silent. But its silence is significant. To each of the *preliminary* resurrections—that of the Ruler's daughter, the widow's son, and Lazarus—some circumstance is added clearly showing that they were raised that their mortal existence might be extended. But to the re-living of the "*company of saints*" after Christ came out of the tomb, no circumstance is added other than that they showed themselves in the holy city. If they were raised in attestation of Christ's

resurrection, we must conclude that they arose to immortality ; for Jesus was made alive to "*die no more.*" And if their rising was a prelude to the resurrection of all saints, they could not have died again. We believe their resurrection was typical, and that they are still alive.

If it be asked if this does not imply an "*intermediate state*" for departed souls? we answer, No ; for they came out of the grave *bodily*, and if they are still alive at all, they are alive *bodily*. "*Many bodies* of the saints that slept arose and came out of the graves." Matt. 27: 52, 53. There are two *translated* saints—Enoch and Elijah—*somewhere*. Perhaps that glorious company of whom we have been speaking are with them. Saints translated *bodily* and souls translated *out from bodies* are very different matters.

To the theory which claims that saints enter into the glorified state in the kingdom of heaven at death, it is of vital importance to get rid of the doctrine of a literal resurrection ; for it is not easy to understand the necessity of a resurrected body after the soul has been glorified and perfectly happy in the presence of God for thousands of years.

Moreover, the re-entrance of the soul into a material form, after ages of blissful existence without the body, would require a readjustment of the laws of being ; for the conditions fitly governing the existence of a mental entity, without physical relations, could not be appropriate to a soul occupying and acting through the faculties of a material body. So that if a soul, after ages of heavenly happiness,

independent of the body, should be appointed to resume the occupancy of a physical form, it would of necessity then commence an entirely and essentially new mode of existence.

And as the Bible intimates no such change, the latest theological device is to get rid of the doctrine of bodily resurrection altogether by simply using the word "*dead*," and excluding the word "*body*"; thus making the inspired writers teach, not a *bodily* resurrection, but the resurrection of the "*dead*"; the object being to open a wide door for the speculative theories—the "*germ theory*"; the theory which holds that there is formed a spiritual body within the material bodies of saints, and that at death the soul throws off the outer or physical form, and in the inner or spiritual body flies away into glory and exists forever in bliss without the need of the old mortal frame; or the theory which teaches that at death a new ethereal "*luminiferous*" body will invest the soul and constitute its visible form.

To discover the fallacy of these theories we only need to bring them to the standard of the Inspired Word. We lay down the following proposition, which cannot, we think, be successfully controverted: The resurrection of Christ was intended to be and is the guarantee of the resurrection of all men and the type of the resurrection of saints.

Of what importance was it that our Lord should conquer death, if his victory over the grim monster could be no benefit to those who believe in him as their Deliyerer? If it shall be said, "He died to

expiate our guilt," why then did he not, after "tasting death for every man," triumphantly ascend from the cross to the throne? Why need he slumber for days and nights in death, and make his victorious passage to his place of power *through the grave*, if his saints are never to escape from the dark and loathsome prison of the tomb? Of what possible interest to the saints is Christ's resurrection from the dead, if it does not insure *their* resurrection? Of what force or use, in the redemptive economy, is our Lord's victory over the tomb, if it brings no deliverance to those who have "believed on his name"? Nay, the Saviour's grand march through the "*valley and shadow of death*" was the most cruel mockery of the utter helplessness and hopelessness of the millions who are held fast in the great destroyer's iron grasp, if the power of death is never to be broken.

But is there any positive, inspired proof that "Christ's resurrection is the *guarantee* of the resurrection of the dead"? Luther said, "One plain text is as good as forty."

In his inimitable defence of the doctrine of the resurrection, in his first letter to the Corinthians, St. Paul uses the following forcible and explicit language: "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming." 1 Cor. 15:

In commenting upon this text John Wesley says: "His [Paul's] proof of the resurrection lies in a narrow compass. The proof is short, but solid and convincing, that which arose from Christ's resurrection. Now this—Christ's resurrection—not only proved a resurrection possible, but as it proved him—Christ—to be a divine teacher, proved the *certainty* of a general resurrection, which he also expressly taught. The first-fruits of them that slept—the earnest *pledge* and *assurance* of their resurrection who slept in him."

And to this fair and conclusive exegesis by Mr. Wesley we may add: How can Christ's resurrection be the "*first-fruits* of them that slept," if no *harvest* is to follow? But as it is not so much the fact of resurrection as the character or manner of the re-living that is in controversy, we turn to the second point in our proposition: Christ's resurrection is the *type* of the resurrection of saints.

Once more we quote the significant words of the apostle Paul: "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the *first-fruits* of them that *slept*." Now the harvest must be like the "*first-fruits*"—or sample—as otherwise the "*first-fruits*" would be a deception, a cheat. And the apostle positively affirms that Christ's resurrection was the "*first-fruits* of them that slept"—who were dead, and therefore proper subjects of resurrection.

To say that our Lord's rising from the dead was the "*first-fruits*" of saved immortal souls is absurd, for immortal souls were never dead, never can be dead. But what the apostle meant to teach, and

did teach was that Christ's resurrection body was the sample of the resurrected bodies of saints. And in this sense only can we understand such scriptures as the following: "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage." Heb. 2: 14, 15. And, "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." Phil. 3: 21.

We will now, reverently and carefully, examine our Lord's resurrection, as a *type* of the re-living of saints.

And first, the real material body of Christ that was born of the Virgin, that suffered and expired on the cross, was buried and rose again on the third day "according to the Scriptures." Every element and every particle of the Saviour's body that was buried in Joseph's new tomb was raised from the dead. There was no waste or change during his death-sleep, for one of the predicted evidences of his Messiahship was that he should not be left in *hades* nor "*see corruption*." Psa. 16: 10. His was a perfect humanity. There was no taint of evil, no seeds of disease in him. He needed to undergo no change in the process of re-living. He only needed to *conquer* death, in the interest of dead saints. If a

single element of his nature was left in the dominion of death, his victory was not complete. And this agrees with the exhibition he made of himself *after* his resurrection, and the claim which he made to personal identity.

"And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. And when he had thus spoken, he showed them his hands and his feet. And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat? And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of a honeycomb. And he took it, and did eat before them. And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day." Luke 24: 36-46.

Let us analyze this text. "*Jesus himself.*" This expression can signify no less than the personal Christ in the fullest and most actual sense. He was "*himself*" as they had seen and known him.

before his death. His words were an appeal to their familiar knowledge of his person, acquired by their long and intimate acquaintance with him. So the doubting disciple, when convinced, cried out in joyful surprise, "My Lord and my God."

"Behold my hands and my feet, *that it is I myself.*" And to Thomas, who was determined not to be deceived in a matter so vital to his grandest hopes, he said, "Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side; and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God."

Now, how could his wounded side and his nail-pierced hands be an identification of his personality if it was any other than the body that suffered on the cruel tree? Had it been an immaterial body, would not the incredulous Thomas have detected the change and felt that his Lord was cruelly mocking his devoted affection?

But the risen Saviour pressing still further the tests of his identity said, "Handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not *flesh* and *bones* as ye see me have. And when he had thus spoken he showed them his hands and his feet."

Dare any one say that this was all illusion? that Christ pathetised the disciples and made them see and feel "*nail-prints*" where there were no "*nail-prints*"? and that he made them feel *flesh* and *bones* where there was nothing but an ethereal semblance? and made them believe that they saw and handled the same body that they had seen hanging

in shame and blood on the cross, and that their women had tenderly prepared for the burial, when, in fact, that glorious body was not before them, but, instead, only a fleshless, boneless, unreal, immaterial, ethereal outline of a personal body? To hold thus is to charge our Lord with practicing upon the loving, trusting hearts that had left all to follow him, and who were still to defend his name and his words even unto the fires and pangs of martyrdom, a deception and fraud which, considering the solemnity and grandeur of the scene and the subject, surpasses in cruelty and perfidy the power of human conception.

And then our Lord followed up this illusion—if it was illusion—in manifesting himself in the same way many times afterward to his followers; sometimes to little groups, and sometimes to hundreds; always leaving them in the confident belief that they had seen and conversed with their dead but risen Lord. So that the cleansed and loving Mary Magdalene, in the outburst of her unrestrainable gladness, ran to the others and said, “*I have seen the Lord.*” Not a phantom, not a resplendent, ethereal spectre, but “*the Lord*”—our own blessed, crucified, buried Master. We seem to hear her insisting that it is he “himself,” and that she knew him by the scar on his temple, and by the wounds in his hands.

And our Saviour’s resurrected body is certainly the type of resurrected saints, for the apostle Paul declares with inspired authority, “For our conversation—citizenship—is in heaven; from whence also

we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ; who will change our vile [mortal] body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious *body.*” Phil. 3: 20. And John, also, affirms: “But we know that when he shall appear we shall be *like him.*” 1 John 3: 2.

As, therefore, the Lord Jesus actually and literally arose from the dead, so will his saints as literally arise. As the Saviour’s resurrected body was a physical, tangible, material form of “flesh and bones,” so will be the resurrected bodies of those who “sleep in Jesus.” “For the Lord HIMSELF shall descend from heaven with a shout with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first.”

Next to our Lord Jesus Christ, St. Paul was the great teacher and defender of the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead. The second personal coming of Christ and the resurrection of the dead at his “coming and kingdom” were the living flame of the great apostle’s ministry, flashing out through the mists of philosophy and tradition as heat-lightning burns and glows in the distempered atmosphere. Whether before Agrippa on trial for his life, or standing in the Agora at Athens with a motley group of Philosophers, Stoics, Epicureans and Pantheists for an audience, with heathen gods on every side of him, the burden and power and flashing glory of his speech was “Jesus and the resurrection.”

He never lost sight, for a moment, of this grand head-light of his Christian faith. He wrote and

preached as if surrounded with opening graves and the rising dead. All his epistles are radiant with the splendors of resurrection hope. The gospel as preached by Paul, were the resurrection left out, would collapse into an incoherent mass of absurdity. Were he alive to-day and preaching at some Athens of modern skeptical theology, he would again demand, with the authority of the Inspired Word and in the power of the Spirit, "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you that God should raise the dead?"

In his first letter to the Corinthian church his mind and heart took fire with the sublime certainty of personal resurrection, and he penned the grandest and most conclusive defence of the doctrine of life after death ever addressed to men. It will reward us well to examine that argument, point by point. Let the thoughtful reader open his Bible to 1 Cor. 15: 12.

The first point pressed by the apostle with pertinency and great force is the inconsistency of preaching the resurrection of Christ and denying the resurrection of all men. He says: "Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen."

Thus St. Paul puts the resurrection of Christ and the re-living of all men on the same footing. So that to deny the general resurrection is, in effect, to deny that the Saviour rose from the dead. Yet many religious teachers in our time fall into the

same absurdity of preaching Christ's resurrection, and at the same time denying that dead men can live again.

Paul's second proposition is that all gospel preaching depends, for its authority and utility, upon the resurrection of Christ. "And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain." As Christ is the centre and source, the Alpha and Omega of the gospel, and as the Christian economy requires a high priest in the heavens, a living, personal intercessor, if Christ be not risen all "preaching is vain," for if there be no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not in existence. And as the commission to preach the gospel is declared to have been given by the Saviour *after* his resurrection, if he was not raised then the commission to preach the gospel "to every creature" was spurious and without force.

And furthermore, our apostle insists that the living saints are still in their sins, and the dead saints are hopelessly lost, if there be no resurrection. "And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished." For, as the only hope of eternal life rests on resurrection, and as the re-living of the dead saints depends on the resurrection of Christ, if Christ "be not risen" then they who sleep in Jesus are perished—have forever ceased to exist.

Had the apostle paused here, the impenetrable gloom of non-existence after death would have covered, like a black pall, the world's last hope. But

our inspired defender of the faith exultingly adds, "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept." So that the coming again, from the valley of silence and darkness, of those who "sleep in Jesus" sustains the same relation to Christ's escape from death that the full harvest sustains to the "first-fruits," or sample. This epistle was written, probably, at about the time of the Passover, and the day after Passover Sabbath was the time for offering the *first-fruits*, which corresponded to the day of Christ's resurrection; and this gave peculiar force to the beautiful metaphor. As, therefore, the "*first-fruits*" were both a *sample* and a *guaranty* of the general harvest, so Christ's resurrection is both the *type* and *surety* of the general resurrection; and as the harvest must be of the same kind as the "*first-fruits*," so the resurrected bodies of men must be like the risen body of the Saviour; and as Christ's resurrected person was proved by "many infallible witnesses" to have been the identical person or body that bled and expired on the cross and reposed in death in Joseph's tomb, so the resurrected persons or bodies of men must be the same bodies which lived on earth, fell in death, and slumbered in the grave. This is the force and conclusion of the inspired apostle's reasoning; and who is prepared to controvert it?

But the apostle goes further and asserts the *universality* of the resurrection. He says, "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even

so in Christ shall all be made alive." As the death brought on by Adam involved the entire race, so the life from death brought in by Christ will be universal. "The hour cometh in the which *all* that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth." As Adam was alone responsible for the first death, which strikes down the whole race, good and bad, saint and sinner alike; so Christ, in his own right, unconditionally and without respect of persons, will make *all* alive.

But let no one jump at the conclusion that, as all will be raised from the dead, therefore all will be saved; for the apostle immediately adds, "But every man in his own order: Christ the first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming." "*Every man in his own order*"—rank, company or regiment. The first death, since Adam's fall, is without condition; no one can escape it, except by translation, which is in a sense its equivalent; but the second death, through Christ, is conditional, and all men, who have not already decided their own destiny, may escape it. And the decision is to be made, through Christ, in the present or mortal life. And although *all* will be raised from death, yet "*every man*" will come forth in his "*own rank*." Sinners will be raised sinners, and saints will be raised saints.

But not only to the Corinthians did Paul preach the glorious doctrine of the resurrection, but, holding it as a corner stone of the great Christian fabric, he kept it at the very front in all his sermons, letters, appeals and conversation. He urged it upon the

attention and faith of the churches, everywhere and all the time, as the pivotal truth upon which the entire code of inspired doctrines must depend for its consistency and validity; declaring most solemnly and emphatically that, "if there be no resurrection of the dead," our "preaching is vain," "we are yet in our sins," and all the dead saints "are perished."

In his letter to the church in Rome, in his opening passage, he sets forth the resurrection as the proof of Christ's sonship; and rests his claim to apostleship upon that doctrine (Rom. 1: 4, 5), frankly admitting that if the resurrection was not true, there could be no authority or sense in his preaching.

And he further teaches that Christian baptism derives its significance from the burial and rising again of our Lord Jesus Christ; and assures the believers at Rome, and through them the whole church, that "if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." Rom. 6: 4, 5.

It is very clear that, so long as St. Paul is allowed to be good authority, the blessed doctrine of the resurrection must be conceded a very prominent place in the resplendent galaxy of revealed truths.

And as teaches Paul, so teach all the apostles. Peter, like Paul, begins his epistles by placing the doctrine of the resurrection in the foreground. He presents it at once as the key to immortality and the inheritance of saints. His heart is aglow with the hope of resurrection glory, and he breaks out in

ascriptions of praise to God the Father for his wonderful method of restoring believers to their lost Edenic estate by bringing them again from the dead, as a sequence to the resurrection of Christ: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." 1 Pet. 1: 3-5.

So in the inspired conception of both Paul and Peter the re-living of saints is the bow of promise spanning the broad, glowing arch of Scripture doctrine. The gospel with resurrection expunged would be mystical, pulseless, spectral.

But, thanks be to God, our preaching is not vain, and "they who sleep in Christ are" not "*perished*," for Jesus is alive from the dead, and because he lives we "shall live also."

Let us now consider the question, "How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?" 1 Cor. 15: 35.

Jesus had no physical defects. He was humanity at its best. He needed no bodily change *in* or *at* resurrection, save to be made alive from the dead, to die no more. His person as it came out of the tomb was humanity in physical perfection. His resurrected body—as we have previously shown—*was* and *is* the type of resurrected saints. "We shall be *like* him, for we shall see him as he is."

But saints go into death marred by many physical imperfections; for grace does not cure bodily derangements altogether. Therefore resurrection will bring to saints many and important physical changes, thus making their vile bodies like unto his glorious body. The ineffable splendors that enveloped the Saviour's person in the transfiguration and in the Patmos visions were *regal*, or *kingly*, forming no essential part of his resurrected body, and will, therefore, not be shared by the risen saints. It is not said that Moses and Elias wore glistening garments, or that their faces shone, though they represented resurrected and translated saints.

But "with *what* body do they come?" We answer, with *their own* body. As Christ's own body, and not the body of another, nor *another* body, came forth from death and *hades*, so the saints will arise with their own body; not with the body of another, interchanged, nor with another or newly furnished body, but with the identical form and essential parts that fell in death.

And with this view agrees St. Paul's beautiful but much distorted illustration in his first letter to the Corinthians. (1 Cor. 15: 35-38.)

Now, the apostle addresses his illustration to a "*fool*," or false apostle, who denies the resurrection because he cannot comprehend the methods by which it is accomplished.

The points in Paul's simile are: First, That life *may* follow death; for so it is in the reproduction of the grains. "Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die." And God can quicken to life dead bodies as easily as dead grains.

Second: Every seed comes with "*his own body*." A wheat harvest never comes of a barley sowing, nor rye of oats. "God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed *its own body*." That is, it hath pleased God that every grain which is sown into death, in the earth, shall be followed by a harvest of *its own kind*. And God, in nature, never makes a mistake. There is no confusion among the different grains sown. Wheat is never changed to barley, either in the period of decay and death, or in the waving golden harvest. Sown wheat, it springs up wheat, ripens wheat, remains wheat.

And our apostle applying this analogy in nature to the resurrection would say that, notwithstanding the doubts and scoffings of scientifically foolish men, who parade their wisdom against omnipotent power, God can and will raise dead men to life, by his own divine Spirit, and will take as good care that every saint sown in death shall come again from the dead in *his own body*, as he does that every seed sown in the earth bears a harvest just like itself. The laws of redemption are as immutable as the laws of nature.

As Christ came out of the hadean prison with his own identical body, bearing still his glorious scars of victorious battle with him who hath the power of death; so the martyrs and all the saints will rise, at the last trumpet; not in luminiferous forms, mere shadowy outlines of a once manly person; contemptible counterfeits, frauds, cheats; but every one, small and great, in *his own* identical body.

And as there is no confusion among the seeds sown—barley never mistaking itself for wheat, nor corn for oats; so there will be no confusion in the resurrection of dead bodies. The iron-featured, irrepressible Paul will not mistake himself for the mild and delicate St. John. Noah will not change identity with Jacob; and Job will "see God," not through the mists of ethereal senses, but with his own eyes; as literally as he ever looked on a beautiful landscape in the country of his nativity.

But the inquirer may desire to know just what is meant by literal and identical resurrection.

The mortal bodies of the saints are full of defects and deficiencies, many of which are carried to the grave. So it is not claimed that every particle, form and feature that ever belonged to the body, or that belonged to it at death, will reappear in the resurrection body. All that *sin* has wrought in our physical natures will go, with death itself, into eternal oblivion; and the deficiencies which are the consequence of sin will be made up in the resurrection life. But every particle, element, force, form and feature *essential* to real, physical, identical, recognizable personality will inhere in the resurrection body; so that Abraham will be Abraham, and Paul will be Paul in the most positive, actual, visible and material sense. And the resurrected body will be so really the same body that lived, died and was buried, that death will have lost its victim, and the grave will be *emptied* of its tenant. The resurrection of the just will consist, inclusively, of two grand changes: the actual re-living of the dead body, and

its restoration to the conditions of primal, perfect humanity, with personal, physical identity unimpaired. The unburial or raising up of the dead will be as literal as were the dying and the burial. As really as "the graves were *opened*, and many *bodies* of the saints which *slept* arose, and came *out* of the graves after his resurrection" (Matt. 27: 52, 53), so really and certainly will all the dead arise from the vales of silence and darkness, at the archangel's call.

But it may be said that the dead are not all in the grave, many having been devoured, and many left unburied. Well, they are *somewhere*, and God knows where every particle is; and the same divine, omnipotent energy that created man and gave birth to illimitable worlds can gather together the dead dust of all the ages, reorganize, and give it life again. It cannot be more difficult to reanimate than to create.

It may be further urged as an objection to literal resurrection that it is unscientific, unphilosophical. But this objection comes too late. Many instances of actual resurrection of dead persons have already occurred; notably that of Christ our Lord, and the "many bodies of the saints which slept . . . which came *out* of the graves after his resurrection." Matt. 27: 52. The tomb is open. Its massive gate, draped with the moss of ages, stands ajar. Its silent, dismal vaults are empty. Its victims are escaped. "He is not here, he is risen." Sure precursor of the final awakening and coming forth, in the beauty of immortality, of all who still "sleep in Jesus."

But however the objection that resurrection is unscientific may serve the purpose of skepticism, how can any one who claims to believe in the Christian system as a revelation of God question the doctrine on the ground of scientific criticism?

The redemptive economy, from inception to completion, is resplendent supernaturalism. Revelation has no *necessary* relation to science. Redemption is God working on a plane higher than nature, and wielding omnipotent forces independently of all known principles of science. The operations of divine power in the plan of salvation *may* be in harmony with scientific deduction; but Christianity as a system of spiritual forces is not secondary to or in any way dependent upon science. In presence of the *incarnation*, science must forever stand with folded hands and closed lips. And philosophy bows its head in silent wonder as the Man of Nazareth ascends in the clouds of heaven to the right hand of the Majesty on high. The resurrection of dead bodies is no greater *mystery* than "God made flesh."

The moment we surrender the position of supernaturalism in Christianity we give away to scientific skepticism the entire phenomena of revealed truth and Christian experience. And how then can we defend regeneration, answers to prayer, the *miraculous* conception, the resurrection and ascension of our Lord?

So when we are asked, "*How* are the dead raised up?" there is but one possible answer—**BY THE POWER OF GOD.** The same essential, almighty, independent divine energy that created man at first, and

brought these systems of worlds to birth, and bound them together in harmony and beauty, *can* and *will* reanimate the dead dust of all whom the hateful "enemy" has slain.

The Omnipotent is not on his knees at the altars of modern scientific thought. God lived before nature began; and he can manifest his power independently of natural law. "Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God."

All the forces of the universe are under his control; and every element and atom are subject to his behest. He has only to will it, and each particle, essential to the personality and identity of all the saints that have lived and died, will instantly find its place in a resurrection form that shall be as really the self-same person that existed before, as Christ's resurrection body was identical with the Christ of the garden and of the cross.

Death's harvest, of the righteous, shall in the end be barren. The grace of form, the color of the eye, the tone of voice, the fond expression, the look of love—all that memory holds precious, shall re-bloom in fadeless beauty; and resurrection perfectness and glory shall mock the fell destroyer—himself destroyed—and smile at the helpless yearnings of empty graves.

## CHAPTER VI.

## PERSONAL RECOGNITION IN THE HEAVENLY WORLD.

Pure and loving companionship was a beautiful element in the bliss of Eden. "It is not good that the man should be alone," said the Lord God, of the first human creature. Loneliness would have shrouded Paradise in gloom. Man was fashioned for the grandest relations of personal friendship. Had Eden been spared the blight of sin, there would have been developed a race of holy, loving beings just a little lower than the angels.

The first pair looked in the face of God, and were not repulsed. Those pure, beautiful creatures in the "garden" may have held converse with the higher orders of beings. Perhaps they were the peers of seraphs. Who knows but that the loftiest social relations between themselves and other races were rudely sundered by the fall, as when the false angels fell from heaven?

But Paradise restored will bring back the primeval conditions, and ransomed and restored man will take rank again in the relations of the intelligent universe. And if Adam and Eve were social beings, and knew their children, and were known by their children, and if their offspring knew each other, will

not the second Adam know his own who are born of his Spirit, purified by his blood, and raised up by his power? And will not his ransomed *children* know and love each other, even as the first Adam's children knew and loved each other, and more perfectly, as they will be free from sin?

Moreover, does not the very *hope* of life in the new Eden, through the new or second Adam, renew the purest and most sacred personal relations? And are these holy fellowships, begun in grace, to be wanting in glory? But how can there be fellowship in heaven without *recognition*? Will it be a masked fellowship of countless millions of beings no one of whom is personally known to us? Shall we worship the Lamb with we know not whom? Shall we sing anthems in the heavenly mansions with voices that shall have no "well known note"? Will it give us no thrill of new delight to know it is Abraham, or Moses, or Elijah, whose immortal hand we clasp in ours? Must we cease singing—

"And if our *fellowship below*  
In Jesus be so sweet,  
What heights of rapture shall we know  
When round his throne we meet!"

For how can we have fellowship, even in heaven, with those whom we do not know? Will personal recognition in the new world be universal? And, if so, by what law?

We cannot doubt that the first man, before his folly of transgression, possessed all the human faculties in vast excess of their present power. The palsying blow of sin fell as heavily on the intellect

as on the physical form. All the mental forces were swept down as golden grain before some blasting cyclone, so that what was plain and clear to Adam's intuitive perception now requires years of toilsome study to understand, and, in many respects, baffles the widest research altogether. The first pair were not pupils, with nature as a vast volume of mysteries requiring ages of wearisome application to understand; but perfect human beings, able to discern at a glance the nature and operative forces of the world over which God gave them "*dominion*."

Creative power belonged to God alone; but to man was given, as necessary to his high rank of being, vast perceptive powers. So when "out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air," he "brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them; and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof." Gen. 2: 19.

Some exegetists of high authority hold that "Adam's powers of perception were supernaturally enlarged to know the character, habits and uses of each species that was brought before him." But it is not easy to believe that the infinitely wise and powerful Jehovah would have created a being of the rank of man so incapable as to require a *miracle* to be wrought to enable him to perform the first act required of him. It seems much more reasonable to regard that first exhibition of intelligence and perceptive capacity as *characteristic* of the newly created man, and proof that he possessed intuitive discernment.

And this view, we think, is sustained by much scriptural teaching. For example, St. Paul, admitting the imperfection of human perception while in the mortal state, claims that in the world to come knowledge will be perfect. He says, "For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is *perfect* is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.... Now I know in part; but *then* shall I know even as also I am known."

On this text John Wesley has the following remarks: "Now we see even the things that surround us, but by means of a glass, or mirror, which reflects only their imperfect forms, in a dim, faint, obscure manner; so that our thoughts about them are puzzling and intricate, and everything is a kind of riddle to us. But then we shall see, not a faint reflection, but the objects themselves *face to face*—distinctly; . . . in a clear, full, comprehensive manner; in some sense like God, who penetrates the centre of every object, and sees at a glance through my soul and all things."

Certainly the apostle did not intend to claim that in the perfect world he would be able to know God in the sense of comprehending the Infinite One; but that his mental and physical powers will then be recovered to their primitive strength and scope, so that he will not have to begin as a child and acquire knowledge by slow processes, but will know at sight, and perceive at a glance, *intuitively*, all things, to the full extent of finite apprehension.

And if Paul will know God and all things in nature *perfectly*, will he not personally recognize the

saints, fellow heirs with him in glory; partners of his faith and toils; fruits of his labors; sheaves gathered by his hands; sons in the gospel; begotten in his bonds; the proofs and joy of his ministry; the stars in his crown of rejoicing?

And will not all the redeemed know Paul? Would the redeemed millions be content, even in heaven, without the privilege of looking in the eyes and grasping the hand of him whose masterly words of power wrought in them repentance unto salvation, and brought them through grace to the immunity of crowns, inheritance and a kingdom?

Writing to the Thessalonians, many of whom he never saw in the flesh, St. Paul most tenderly claims them as the trophies of his ministry. "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye, in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ, at his coming?" 1 Thess. 2: 19.

How affectionately and vigorously these words lay hold of personal recognition and glorified friendship in the perfected state! How fondly the dear apostle cherished the anticipation of presenting the converts—gathered into the kingdom by his labors, his tears, his stripes—to the Master "*at his coming*"! How his great heart swelled with a holy exultation, as he looked away from his scars, and his chains, and his coming martyrdom, to the moment of his Lord's appearing, when his children in the gospel should come and stand by his side, "in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ," his "crown of rejoicing!" But how can Paul's "hope, and joy, and crown of rejoicing," in his "children of whom he travailed in

birth" be realized in Christ's "presence" if there is to be at and after "his coming" no personal recognition?

Perfectly consonant with Paul's happy expectations are the far-reaching words of the Saviour: "And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven: but the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Matt. 8: 11.

A knowledge on the part of the redeemed of the fulfillment of this scripture will require, first, a recognition of the persons called "the children of the kingdom," who are to be "cast out"; and, second, a personal recognition of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; for how can those that "shall come from the east and from the west" know that they are "sitting down in the kingdom" with those glorious patriarchs unless they recognize them? If we are not to know each other in the heavenly world, one might sit forever with Abraham at his right hand, and Jacob at his left, wondering who those majestic personages, so grand in form and glorious in feature, might be.

It would be a frigid existence, to spend eternity among myriads of shining forms, "unknowing and unknown," never discerning a familiar face or detecting a well-known voice. Never beholding a form once beautiful to our eyes and dear to our hearts. Never grasping a hand whose pulses thrilled us "of yore." Never looking in eyes whose light was once our joy. Never listening to little foot-falls delight-

ful to our ears—*long time ago*. Never joining in songs of *praise* with forms that once bowed beside us in tears and prayers.

That were a cold, dismal heaven, indeed, spectral and gloomy enough to make the ransomed long for the earth-time fellowships, though blended with sorrows and consecrated with tears. Not so did Paul hope that his “children” would be his “joy and crown” at his Lord’s coming and kingdom.

The economy of grace was not intended to destroy, but to recover and restore. Christ, when heartily accepted as Redeemer and King, does not blot out what remains of humanity, and so complete the ruinous work of Satan; but he lays hold of what is left of man—a magnificent wreck of once vast and majestic powers—and, cleansing with his blood, sanctifying by his Spirit, preserving by his power, and raising from death by his word, he expunges the deadly evils of sin, and restores the ghastly ruins to their primeval symmetry, beauty and glory. Redemption, in the end, works perfect recovery from the effects of the transgression, in all the submissive and believing subjects of atoning grace and power. “To this end was the Son of God manifested, that he might *destroy* the works of the devil.” 1 John 3: 8.

And if Christ shall finally and fully succeed—as we are sure he will—in the utter destruction of Satan’s deadly work, then every physical faculty and mental force will be restored to its original integrity, scope and status, and redeemed humanity will retrieve, through the second Adam, *all* it lost in the

first Adam. So that a ransomed saint, in the heavenly world, will be able to discern and point out the nature, character and purposes of creatures and things around him, by *intuitive* perception, as certainly as Adam was capable of naming, appropriately, the animals presented to him by his Creator, for the first exercise of his grand perceptive faculties. To claim less than this for redeemed and restored man would leave to Satan the color of an eternal triumph.

Not only was Adam able to give to animals names exactly expressive of their nature and purposes, but when his Creator presented him with a “*help meet for him*,” in the person of a pure and beautiful creature, he *instantly* perceived that she was not of the order of the animals which he had just named, but was in the same rank of being with himself, and related to him as the joint head of the human race, and, without any intimation from God, he *named* her *woman*. Here is a most wonderful display of *intuitive perception*.

If the transgression had not occurred, there could have been no deterioration of the human race, and *intuitive* knowledge would have remained one of the royal gifts of our now degenerate humanity. But, God be thanked, through the immaculate purity and mighty power of our second Adam, Paradise with all its ancient loveliness shall reappear, when redeemed and reinstated saints, crowned with pristine royalty, shall no longer “see through a glass *darkly*,” but “shall know as they are [shall be] known.” It can require no higher gifts of knowledge in the glo-

rious inhabitants of the heavenly world, to *intuitively* recognize each other, than Adam displayed in the garden before sin eclipsed the splendid scope of his mental powers.

But if any doubt still lingers that saints will *intuitively* recognize each other in the beautiful land of the saved, a glance at the summit of Tabor, resplendent with the glory of God, will banish it.

The Transfiguration scene is held to be an epitome—rich in grandeur and beauty—of the future kingdom of Christ, in many of its royal aspects. It was a divinely arranged exhibition; and its grouping of representative characters renders it wonderfully attractive to Christian sojourners whose steps bend towards the promised “Paradise restored.” Its majesty and glory, its heavenly voices, its fellowship of two worlds, and its beatitude of love, entrance us with the hope of being participants, some day, in the royalties and blessedness of its magnificent antitype. And a prominent element in that shining portraiture of heaven was *intuitive recognition*.

It had been *fourteen hundred* years since Moses, “with a rock for his couch and the blue sky for his covering,” lay down among the solitary cliffs of Pisgah to die, unseen by mortal eye, and unsolaced save by hand and smile of angels. And through all that lapse of ages, that noble form that once stood “on the beach of the sea, with one arm upraised toward heaven, and the other stretched over the waters, while the waves that went surging by stopped and crouched at his feet,” had never appeared

among mortal men. And no likeness of the great leader of Israel, through the wilderness and through the sea, had ever blest the gaze of the Galilean apostle. Moses appeared in that hallowed scene as one raised from the dead, after a sleep of ages.

And nine weary centuries had cast their shadows over the memories of men since the radiant Elijah went up from Gilgal in his flaming chariot—a whirlwind on fire—drawn by steeds of flame, “into the skies,” watched from the mountain heights by fifty sons of the prophets, letting fall as he ascended his sheep-skin mantle on Elisha, his successor in the long line of prophets.

And although so many ages separated the departure of Moses and Elias from the time of the Transfiguration, yet when those two wonderful personages reappeared on mount Tabor—Elias as the representative of translated saints, and Moses as the representative of resurrected saints—Peter at once recognized them both, and, enraptured with the beauty and grandeur of their persons, and entranced with their words of love, as they conversed so tenderly with Jesus of his approaching sufferings, exclaimed, “Lord, it is good for us to be here; if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.” By what law did Peter recognize at sight those “*two men*”? There can be but one answer. He must have known them by *intuitive perception*; through force of the law underlying Paul’s thrilling words: “Now I know in part; but then”—in the *perfect state*—“shall I know even as also I am known.” 1 Cor. 13: 12.

But should it be objected that Moses was not *really* on mount Tabor; that he still sleeps in his unknown grave—

“On Nebo’s lonely mountain,  
On this side Jordan’s wave”;—

should any one find it possible to believe that the Transfiguration scene—that *epitome of heaven*—was composed *mostly* of real beings, as the disciples, Elias and Jesus, with a blending of *phantasm*, as in the supposed *unreal* presence of Moses, our answer is: If Peter could *intuitively* discern the *apparition* of the great Israelitish leader, when he stands face to face with the real grand old lawgiver, in the perfect world, he will not fail to recognize him at sight. And if Peter shall know Moses, Moses will know Peter, and all the blessed inhabitants of the heavenly country will know each other. That Paradise will be a gloriously social realm we cannot doubt. To think of it as a land of strangers, and therefore a strange land, is repulsive to our fondest aspirations. The same laws of love and admiration that will bind the saints to God and Christ, will render them objects of personal interest to each other. To love others as we love ourselves was the chief element in the Blessed One’s teaching when with us in the flesh. And he will not be jealous if in his own kingdom his blood-ransomed children display the virtues which he taught them here. Perfect love towards God will beget and foster pure fervent love towards all who bear God’s image, in any world.

Eternal yearnings for the bliss of fellowship with kindred beings would drape heaven with sadness;

while to know each other as the subjects of the same redeeming grace, the children of the same Christ and God, would exalt our adoration for him who bought us all with his precious blood, and make our worship sweeter and grander. It may be feared that personal recognition will give us pain in heaven that *some* we loved on earth are not among the saved. Will it not give *greater* pain never to know that *any* of all we loved on earth *are* saved?

Conceive, if any one can, of Abraham gliding about through the myriad ranks of glorified mortals in fruitless quest for Sarah and Isaac, with heartsick yearnings for one blessed glimpse of the Machpelah group! Think of Ruth passing and re-passing Naomi a million times with never a glance of fond recognition! Think of David and Jonathan strangers to each other in heaven! Think of Elijah and Elisha looking in each other’s faces with blank conjecture! Think of Timothy inquiring in vain for Paul! Think of Mary and Elizabeth sitting side by side in the bowers of Eden, each wondering who the other may be!

Imagine Rachel’s increasing sad lament, “refusing to be comforted because her children are not”! It was promised her that they should “come again from the land of the *enemy*,” even to “their own borders.” But of the countless throngs of beautiful young forms that roam, hand in hand, under the fragrant bowers; and the sweet childish faces that gleam in the eternal sunlight; by no well remembered look or voice or winsome grace, can she divine if HER “loved and lost” among them are.

But evermore she wanders through the land of bliss, silent amid its swelling anthems, and sad in presence of its fadeless splendors. How can *she* be comforted with her eyes forever holden that she may not look upon the beauty of her own?

Were this forbidding picture true to the life of saints in the Edenic home, well might faith fold her wings, and hope and love despair. For if the redeemed are to be nothing to each other; if all the memories of earthly experiences and earthly relations in Christ are doomed to perish; if the saints are to be "a congregation vast" of cold, glittering, emotionless entities; then an entire *recast* of our constitutional natures and affectional endowments will be required—a readjustment of all our faculties and powers, so that we shall cease to be *ourselves*, all things wearing a strange and foreign air.

But let us turn our saddened eyes away from these false and dismal views, and catch some glimpses of the bright and peaceful land of the just as it is foreshadowed in the blessed Book. Its innumerable inhabitants are the ransomed of earth. Through "tribulations great" they came, "having washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." Changed, but still *themselves*. Sin, sickness, want, pain and death forever gone. All else that made them what they were secured and glorified. Knowledge complete; love pure and perfect; every faculty at its best, and faultless. No tear-stain on the radiant cheek; no shadow on the majestic brow; no faltering tone in the well-known voice; no hesitating step, or bent forms

trembling with age; no accursed *caste*; no orphan child pale with sorrow and shrunken with hunger; no drunkard's girl standing apart with shame. All well, all happy, all beautiful, all rich, all immortal; each *known* to all, and *all* to each;—*known* not by the slow processes of cautious, half-doubting acquaintance, but "knowing as they are known."

The heavenly faces of Abraham, Sarah, and the dear boy Isaac; of Ruth and Naomi; of Joseph and Samuel; of Paul and Barnabas; of Polycarp and all the martyrs; the faces of mother and child, of pastor and people,—*all, each and all*, familiar at first glance; evermore familiar. And our great Prince, our glorious Lord and King, "*chiefest*" among the ten thousands; above all, over all; glorious beyond compare; to Him will all voices give unceasing acclaim of power and majesty and glory, forever and ever.

What meetings, what greetings, what hand-shakings, what salutations will be there! How Rachel's broken heart, healed now beyond the touch of anguish, will sound with heavenly joy! how her glad eyes will gleam and sparkle with delight as her once slain and long absent children come trooping round her, with perennial flowers of Paradise in their dimpled hands and in their golden hair! Let the weeping Rachels of to-day look through their tears to that Edenic greeting—*sure to come*.

What meetings! That was a touching scene at the court of Pharaoh when the grief-stricken Jacob fell on the neck of his long mourned Joseph—found at last—in his bosom once more. When all the

weeping Jacobs shall find their delivered Josephs, what joy there will be in heaven! How angelic faces will stream with tears of gladness as they behold their greetings!

What meetings! Paul and Stephen! When last they exchanged glances Stephen was the martyr and Saul the persecutor and murderer. But the heavenly light which played on the dying disciple's features slew at length the proud and stately young Pharisee. How affecting will their greeting be, in the kingdom, as they embrace each other and bow together at the Saviour's feet; washed in the same blood, saved by the same hand—martyr and murderer trophies of the same great love!

Hail, long-wished-for day when riven fellowships and quenched affections shall be restored, in the *changeless* ages! Joy for the hour when eyes, long dimmed in death, shall gaze with wonder on forms of beauty and faces of delight! Welcome, grand union and heavenly intercourse of the ransomed from the first Adam's fall to the second Adam's reign!

"When the holy angels meet us,  
As we go to join their band,  
Shall we know the friends that greet us  
In the glorious heavenly land?  
Shall we see the same eyes shining  
On us as in days of yore?  
Shall we feel the same arms twining  
Fondly round us, as before?  
O, ye weary, sad and tossed ones,  
Droop not, faint not by the way;  
Ye can join the loved and just ones  
In the land of perfect day!  
Harp-strings touched by angel fingers  
Murmured in my raptured ear—  
Evermore their sweet song lingers—  
We shall know each other there."

## CHAPTER VII.

### NO RESURRECTION, NO IMMORTALITY.

That men are actually dead and buried in one world, and really and essentially alive and active in another world at the same time, is a startling absurdity. To say that dead men are living men, is to destroy the meaning of language. To claim that men when dead have more knowledge, more power and more enjoyment than they had or were capable of having when alive, involves an inconceivable mysticism, worthy only of modern Spiritualism. To hold that the "essential man" is living and happy at the time when all that was ever seen or heard of him, all that ever came or could come within the range of human perception and recognition, is known and admitted to be dead, is an incomprehensible proposition. To declare that a human being is conscious, active and vigorous in another world, while all the organs, faculties and forces which constitute activity and vigor are known to be locked up in the silence and palsying grasp of death, is too much for logic; quite too much for common sense. Moreover, if a saint may be both

dead and alive at the same time, and much wiser and happier in that state, during vast ages, than he was when *wholly* alive, why should he not forever remain so? If the soul has far greater scope of knowledge and heights of bliss out of the body than in the body, why should it be doomed, after ages of blessedness, to resume its "cumbrous clay"?

But if it be insisted that only the body dies; that the soul, being the "essential man," escapes at death into a world of conscious happiness, then the *death penalty* becomes a trivial matter indeed, failing to touch the "real man," only demolishing the frail earthly tenement.

And if the "real man" is alive and blissful in a "brighter and better world" for thousands of years, while the material man lies dissevered and dishonored in an earthly grave, then the resurrection body cannot be necessary to immortal blessedness. And St. Paul, and all the inspired writers, were quite premature in so constantly and earnestly urging the necessity and grandeur of bodily resurrection as the only way to eternal life. For if conscious and adequate happiness is possible to disembodied spirits for the period of a thousand years, it must be possible and sufficient *forever*.

Besides, if the soul without the body finds, at death, a sphere whose conditions are adapted to its conscious and active enjoyment, and then, after the lapse of ages, comes back and re-inhabits its former physical form, it must then find *another* heaven, for the conditions adapted to the delight of a naked mental entity could hardly be suited to the activities

and joys of material beings. So there must be—in that case—two heavens for saints; one for saints *without* bodies, from death to the resurrection; and another for saints *with* bodies, after the resurrection. This may do for the Swedenborgian, but not for those who derive their views from the Word of God: for the Scriptures reveal but *one* Paradise restored; but one New Jerusalem; but one "entrance through the gates into the City," to "go no more out." No *succession* of heavens; only one "rest" remaining for the "people of God." No *vestibule* to the "house not made with hands," half way between mortality and eternal life.

The saints' title to and surety of eternal life is in Christ alone. He "brought life and *immortality* to light." 2 Tim. 1: 10. "Which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope—or hope of living—by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." 1 Pet. 1: 3. The only hope of future life rests in Christ's resurrection from the dead." And the saint's type and *measure* of life cannot exceed that of his Lord. Was Christ alive while he was dead? Was he in Paradise when he was in the grave? Was he at the "right hand of the Majesty on high" during the three days and nights of his entombment? Did he enjoy during that terrible period of silence and suspense an "*intermediate*" glory of his kingdom? Did he not declare to Mary on the morning of his resurrection that he had "not yet ascended to his Father"? Where was he during those pregnant hours of death's victory and reign over his slain body? Where but in the

*grave?* hallowing the tomb in which his own must sleep till the hour of their awakening, as he, their Lord, slept until the appointed time for his triumphal awakening. Were the dead saints holding jubilee in an "intermediate" Paradise while the scarred Saviour lay a prisoner in the dominion of grim, relentless death? While the Son of God, in the agonies of the streaming cross, was purchasing the right to reign over ransomed men in an everlasting kingdom, to be established at his second coming, were the ancient saints reigning in *advance* of the King himself, in an *intermediate* realm of bliss? Did their songs of "conscious happiness" swell up to the Father's throne above the death-cry of his only Son—"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

Does immortality come in installments; first to the soul at death, and a thousand or three thousand years afterward to the body, at the resurrection?

Was it Elijah's immortal spirit that went up in a chariot of fire? When the seraphic prophet ascended, did he leave anything but his *mantle* behind him?

Did the Lord Jesus ascend to the right hand of power *spiritually or bodily?* What Christian will doubt that the blessed Redeemer is at the court of heaven, prosecuting his advocacy of lost sinners, *in person?*

If, then, the two translated prophets—the only human beings of whose departure to another world we have any account—went up personally and visibly; and if Christ did not ascend till after his resurrection from the dead, and then arose *bodily* in full

view of his disciples; why are we asked to believe that saints, in some mystic, spiritual, disembodied sense, fly away at death, unperceived, to some unrevealed, ethereal sphere, where they exist in conscious bliss for ages, and then return, unperceived, to this world, to find and re-occupy their former tenements of clay, without which they had been perfectly happy for so long a time? This view is as inharmonious with the plan of redemption as it is contradictory of nature and reason. And it is, therefore, perfectly consistent in "modern orthodoxy" to deny outright the resurrection of the body, and maintain, as it does, that at death man drops his materialism altogether, and is thereafter only a mental entity. For if dead saints are capable of conscious happy existence out of the body for thousands of years, why need they ever resume material forms?

But does God's infallible Word teach anything of this kind? So many very excellent people believe. Let us see.

The death penalty was not partial, but total. It ran against the entire person of the offender. Its terms were not, "Thou shalt die" physically, but survive mentally; not thy **body** shall die, but thy **soul** shall *not* die. But "**THOU** shalt die." The whole man was involved in the fatal transgression. And the penalty laid hold of the entire person of the offender. Every part, faculty and power, every fibre of the body and every force of the mind fell under the penalty against sin. And the penalty was **DEATH**. Not death of some parts of man, while other parts escape. Not partial paralysis, affecting

some members of the body while other members remain intact, untouched, uncursed. But *death*. Death of *man*, the *sinner*. Surely, the higher, mental faculties must not be exempt, for in the full possession of all the powers of his being man did the sin, committed the deadly act. And on the higher faculties rested the greater guilt. The *entire persons* of the first pair, all there was *in* and *of* them, were put under the law of obedience; and their whole natures were concerned in the fatal deed. It was not the foot nor the hand, the tongue nor the brain, but the *man* and the *woman*, that surrendered to the satanic intrigue. And so the penalty: "*Thou shalt surely die.*"

It was, indeed, announced to the happy twain, in most seductive tones, amid the innocence and beauty of the garden: "*Thou shalt not surely die.*" But that was not the voice of God. Those silvery, deceitful words came through the lips of the destroyer, the devil, Satan. And out of them has arisen more false doctrine than from any other sentence ever pronounced in heaven or earth.

The penalty was death. Not *separation* of soul and body, the body being destroyed and the soul—bidding defiance to the broken law—rising untouched to higher spheres. But *death*, positive, complete, of every faculty and force. So that the spirit of inspiration declares: "There is no *work*, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest." Eccl. 9: 10. "For in death there is no remembrance of thee; in the grave who shall give thee thanks?" Psa. 6: 5. "The living know that they

shall die; but the dead know not anything." Eccl. 9: 5.

So the offended and relentless *law* stands with its iron foot on the neck of the race. If no adequate and accepted ransom had been found, man, under the death penalty, must have fallen into utter and endless extinction; for the penalty was positive, and ran against the offender, as such, in the most inclusive, personal sense. And immediately after the transgression the Lord God excluded the sinner from any possible means of perpetuating his existence, despite the edict—"And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever; therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken." Gen. 3: 22, 23.

If man left the garden an immortal being, and is, therefore, still immortal, in whole or in *part*, then the death penalty was *thwarted*, and became, wholly or partly, null and void. To claim that the race is *innately* immortal; that the soul—held to be the essential man—is indestructible, and cannot die, is to assert, in effect, that God's action in excluding Adam from the "tree of life," "*lest*" he should "*eat and live forever*," really failed in its purpose; was a useless precaution; and *despite* the death penalty and the banishment from the garden and the tree of life, man *has* lived from that moment to this, for a time in this world and then in the unseen world; and that, being *indestructible*, he *will* live forever;

that, in fact, he can no more die than God himself can die. This is precisely the sentiment which Satan so successfully urged in his seduction of the woman—the mother of us all. If it be true that man or any essential part of man is indestructible, then Satan's proposition to Eve was correct, and the Lord God acted blindly, or impotently, in his attempts to punish sin by the infliction of death.

Moreover, if the race is constitutionally immortal, then, *despite* his death penalty and his precaution (Gen. 3: 22, 23), the Creator finds in his universe an immensely numerous class of beings whom he can neither reduce to loyalty nor remove out of his way; and eternal and blasphemous hostility to God and God's government is an irremediable fact.

Is God thus powerless to control evil? And was it left to Satan to point out to Eve the great weakness and certain failure of the Lord's verdict against sin? Whom shall we believe, Satan and modern theology, or the Lord our God?

The Bible nowhere declares man to be immortal. The word "immortal" occurs but once in the Scriptures (1 Tim. 1: 17), and is there applied to God: "Now unto the King eternal, *immortal*, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory for ever and ever."

The word "immortality" occurs five times in the Scriptures, and is applied *once* to God (1 Tim. 6: 16), *twice* to saints at the resurrection (1 Cor. 15: 53, 54, and 2 Tim. 1: 10), *once* as a blessing to be sought—(Rom. 2: 7.) But the terms "everlasting life," "live forever," etc., which imply eternal exist-

ence, are several times used, and always applied to believers in Christ; while the expressions, "death," "consumed," "burned up," etc., are always applied to unbelievers. And the righteous dead are spoken of *not* as having gone to heaven, nor as having escaped the death penalty by rising, at the "death of the body," into intermediate bliss; but as being *dead*, in the grave, under the dominion of death; and as *remaining* there until the resurrection.

"The dead praise not the Lord, neither *any* that go down into silence." Ps. 115: 17. "So man lieth down and riseth not; till the heavens be no more they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep." Job 14: 12.

And of so eminent a man as the Psalmist it is said by St. Peter, "For David is not ascended into the heavens." Acts 2: 34. And in 1 Cor. 15, Paul expressly teaches that the grave holds its victims in its relentless grasp until the moment of resurrection. And to the Thessalonians the great apostle declares: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first." 1 Thess. 4: 16.

Now, if the "dead in Christ" are not in the grave, how can they *arise*? And if the dead saints are alive and consciously happy up in an "intermediate state," why should the descending Christ "*shout*," and the archangel utter his *voice*, and the "trump of God" blare, as if to awaken the millions of sleeping saints and call them forth to life and glory, if they have been alive and active and blessed in an upper sphere,

near the throne, ever since they escaped from their mortal frames? If it be insisted that it is only the *bodies* of the saints which the divine Conqueror will call when he comes down from heaven to claim his ransomed people, why then did not Paul speak plainly and say the *bodies* of "the dead in Christ" shall rise first?

Does not the phrase, "The dead in Christ" imply *dead persons*? Can it imply anything less? Have the dead saints double personality—one personality dead and buried in the grave, and the other personality alive and happy in Paradise? If so, is it not singular that no intimation is anywhere made in the Scriptures of the "*reunion*" of the two personalities at the resurrection? On the contrary, Paul's declaration is that the "*DEAD in Christ*" shall rise at the sound of the resurrection voices; and, being risen, shall join the saints who will be "alive and remain," and with them be "caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air," and "so shall we—the *risen* dead and the changed living—ever be with the Lord." What then becomes of the other personalities of the saints that were not in the grave, and therefore did not "rise," but were and had been for ages alive in Paradise? Where will they come in? And to which will Christ say "Well done" at the final reckoning? to the "dead in Christ" that will *rise* at the trumpet's call, or to the other and "*essential*" personalities that were never dead?

There will be two classes of saints "caught up *together*" to meet the Lord in the air, the "*dead in Christ*" having arisen, and the living saints having

been changed. Will there be a *third* class—the disembodied saints who were never dead? Will they come flying from their blissful elysium to join the resurrected "dead in Christ" and those who remain alive till the Lord's coming, and are then changed; and so sweep through the air to meet the Lord, a TRIPLE throng, leaving the "*intermediate*" sphere vacant and silent evermore? Such a scene would be wondrously thrilling. Strange that the inspired writers, in their various descriptions of the final gathering of the saints amid resurrection and ascension splendors, make no mention of it! Job clearly expected to come, not with a third class—the intermediate saints—but with the "*dead in Christ*," for he declared: "Though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my *flesh* shall I see God."

But did not Christ say to the dying thief on the cross, "This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise"? Such were the Saviour's words. But they were uttered in reply to the penitent thief's dying request that he (Christ) would *remember* him when he should come in his kingdom: "And he said unto Jesus, Lord, *remember* me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, This day *shalt* thou be with me in Paradise."

Our Lord could not have meant that the dying malefactor should join him in Paradise on that day, as the Lord did not himself enter into his "*kingdom*" or into Paradise on that day, for three days afterwards he assured Mary that he had "not ascended." These words must, we think, be taken as an emphatic assurance by the gracious Redeemer

that the penitent's prayer was answered, and that his dying request would be remembered by the Saviour *when he shall come in his kingdom.*

But the difference of opinion concerning this scripture arises almost entirely from a question of grammatical construction; viz., whether the comma be placed before or after the Greek adverb of time, *semeron*, rendered "*to-day*" in the New Testament.

Let the reader remember that the *comma* is no part of the original Greek text. The New Testament MSS. were not originally punctuated at all. Punctuation was not introduced into the Greek text till the fifteenth century. And the Bible Societies have thought it proper to *change* the punctuation of some passages, and in other passages there still is doubt. So punctuation, in itself, cannot determine the meaning of any New Testament text.

To reach the real meaning of Luke 23: 43, we must carefully consult the general teaching of the inspired Word touching the matter in question.

If the words of Christ to the thief are held to mean that he should on that day, at and after the moment of his death, be with him (Christ) in Paradise, it follows that *neither* the dying penitent nor our Lord could have remained in death, at longest, beyond the close of that day. But what says the infallible Word? On this important point we have the authority of men, angels, and of Christ himself.

In Matt. 28: 5, 6, the angel says: "Ye seek Jesus who was crucified. He—not his *body*, but **HE**—is not here, for he is risen; as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay." Now the angel

affirms not only that the Lord was "*risen*," which implies that he must have been in the grave, but that he had "*risen*" in accordance with a *prediction* made before his death—"As he said." To what words of Jesus did the angel refer? In Matt. 12: 40 Jesus said: "As Jonah was *three days and three nights* in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."

Was not Jonah actually in the belly of the whale in the most inclusive personal sense? Will any one assume that only Jonah's *body* was thus entombed, and that the real, immaterial Jonah was somewhere else at the same time? This were too glaringly absurd to be entertained by any sound mind. Besides, it is declared that Jonah "*prayed unto the Lord his God out of the fish's belly.*" Jonah 2: 1.

The Saviour distinctly endorsed the account of Jonah's burial in the whale's belly, not omitting to state the *time*—"three days and three nights"—and then made it a *type* of his own burial in the "heart of the earth," taking care to *repeat* the *time*—"So shall the Son of man be *three days and three nights* in the heart of the earth." Can any statement be more explicit? Now, if Christ's prediction concerning himself was fulfilled, then **HE**—not his body merely, but the "*Son of man*"—was in the sepulchre during three days and nights following his crucifixion, and could not, therefore, have gone to Paradise with the thief on the day of their death.

And St. Paul says (Eph. 4: 9, 10), "He descended

first into the lower parts of the earth. He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens." Now, the same "Son of man" that *ascended* was three days and nights in the grave. So says the inspired apostle. If, therefore, less than the whole Christ was in the tomb, then less than the entire Saviour ascended. Are we to believe that it was only the material form of Jesus that showed itself to Mary, and then to the disciples, and later, to five hundred brethren at once; and that the *real* Christ was away all that time with the thief in Paradise? It will not do to say that the Saviour came down from Paradise on the morning of the resurrection of his body, and reunited himself with his material form, for it was on that very morning that he said to Mary, "I have *not* yet ascended."

It seems to us clear and conclusive that the truly penitent thief, who was probably an Israelite, and familiar with the promise of a Messiah, enlightened by the Holy Spirit, saw in the person of the dying Saviour the expected "King of the Jews," and believing that at some time, then future, the prophecy of Jeremiah would be fulfilled concerning him—"Saith the Lord, I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth" (Jer. 23: 5); and holding, in common with all Jews, the doctrine of the resurrection, he desired and prayed to be remembered by Jesus "*when*" he should come "in his kingdom." And to this petition the Lord made answer: "Verily I say unto thee today, *shalt thou be with me in Paradise.*"

That the truly penitent malefactor will be with his Lord and our Lord *when* he comes in his kingdom, we joyfully believe. But that he has *been* in the kingdom, or in any installment of it, for eighteen centuries, in *advance* of his Lord, we cannot accept.

Doctrinal confusion arises from the too free application of human wisdom to the sacred text. The divine Word cannot be very difficult of comprehension when taken in its own light. It cannot be the purpose of *Revelation* to conceal its own meaning. God means to be understood, as otherwise all prophecies, promises and commands would be misleading. Inspired men could not have taught opposite doctrines at different times.

Any author who shall have written five hundred words, may be *made* to teach just the opposite of what he meant to teach, by seizing upon certain words or clauses, independently of the general scope of thought and argument, and giving them an ingenious interpretation. In this way much false doctrine is built up and defended,—notably false views of immortality, resurrection, the second advent, and the nature and location of Christ's kingdom.

A striking case of this kind is found in the claim that St. Paul taught immortality, independent of resurrection, in Phil. 1: 21, 22. In seeking the real meaning of this scripture we propose to let Paul explain Paul; allowing the great apostle to be his own interpreter. Did Paul teach immortality without resurrection—innate immortality?

In 1 Cor. 15: 18, Paul declares that the dead,

even dead saints, “*are perished*”—have utterly lost life and being—if “the dead rise not”; thus making future existence depend upon the resurrection. And in all the apostle’s inimitable argument in defence of the re-living of saints at the second appearing (1 Cor. 15), there is not an intimation of possible immortality, or its equivalent—translation at the appearing of Christ—other than by resurrection from the dead.

In his letter to the Colossians St. Paul uses the following significant language: “For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. WHEN Christ who is our life shall appear, THEN shall ye also appear with him in glory.” No tinge of expectation or desire to be with the Lord *before* “he shall appear,” pervades this language.

And it is this same apostle who breaks out in the following exultant strain in view of deliverance and glory: “Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God which giveth us the victory

through our Lord Jesus Christ.” 1 Cor. 15: 51-57.

Let it be noted that Paul, in this scripture, does not point to the soul’s exit from the body as the hour of “victory through our Lord Jesus Christ”; but to the grand moment “when this *mortal* shall have *put on immortality*.” Not when the immortal soul shall come from Paradise to re-espouse the immortalized body, but “when this *mortal*” (man) shall be made immortal, and death is “swallowed up in victory.” Victory, not to a part of man at death, but victory to the whole man, the man proper, when death shall be spoiled—at the “*appearing*” of Christ “who is our life.”

Now, could our glorious apostle have taught the churches to bear their trials, persecutions and death itself, in assurance of life, immortality, victory and glory *at and by means of* the coming of the Lord and the resurrection, if he believed that his soul and their souls would go to be with the Lord at and after death, and so be glorified with Christ ages previously to his “coming and kingdom”? Can it be that the grand old stalwart soldier of the Crucified, who had fought death and him that hath the power of death” on a hundred fields; and had sent back to the churches, from the thickest of the fight, the mighty cheer—“So when this corruptible shall have *put on incorruption*, and this *mortal* shall have *put on immortality*, THEN shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory”;—is it conceivable that Paul himself, while thus appealing to the churches, and urging the hope of deliverance and eternal life at the

coming and kingdom of the Lord Jesus as the grand inspiration to courage and fidelity, really desired to *die* that he might thereby escape from further toils and sufferings, in the delusive hope of being with Christ in advance of his coming and the establishment of his reign over resurrected saints? Would he have exhorted the Thessalonian band of believers to "*comfort* one another with these words": "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up *together* with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and *so* shall we ever be with the Lord"—would Paul have thus urged the church of his time to look forward to the coming of the Lord and the resurrection of the dead as the *moment* and the *manner* of their deliverance and ascension to "meet their Lord," if he had believed that saints go to be "*with Christ*" at death?

We cannot believe that our apostle would have taught one hope to the churches, and entertained another and an opposite hope for himself. We cannot, therefore, understand him as teaching, in Phil. 1: 21, 22, that he desired to *die*, and so be *at once* "*with Christ*." But we can understand how, in the midst of constant trials and terrible sufferings, he did "*desire*" the deliverance which he had pointed out to his brethren in every place, when, at the Lord's appearing, the dead shall be raised and the living be changed, and *he*, and all the saints, shall "*depart*"—be "*caught up*"—to meet the Lord. This view makes Paul consistent with himself.

But for a more critical exegesis of Philippians 1: 21, 22, we quote the words of the late Charles L. Ives, M. D.

"The whole passage reads: 'Yet what I shall choose I know not. For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better.' This seems to be one of the main pillars of the doctrine that souls continue to live at death. Paul's word 'to depart,' for which he has 'a desire,' is thought to refer to his death, especially as he is just speaking of living or dying; and if death is 'far better,' it can be so only in case one is to be immediately with the Lord. The inference here is apparently very strong that Paul expected to be alive when he was dead, but is it actually just what it seems?

"First, we notice one point which awakens our distrust; we find the passage is not an exact rendering of the original Greek. Certain words have been omitted, and others evidently modified in meaning, seemingly for a purpose. Doubtful indeed the cause which is upheld by anything like unfair dealing!

"Let us compare the English version with the Greek. In verse 23, 'for,' as a rendering of the Greek *de* of the approved MSS., though unusual, need not be objected to: it expresses a transition with somewhat the idea of cause and effect, as it does for instance in Luke 23: 17. 'In a strait betwixt two'; no word for 'betwixt'; the Greek is *ek*, from, or by, here with genitive of the agent; 'two' is '*the* two,' lit. Greek by the two, by both. 'In a strait,' if we are to understand by that in a perplexity about a choice, is not the meaning of *sunechomai*, and moreover that would require the meaning of *ek* to be changed to betwixt. Precisely the same passive present in Luke 12: 60, our translators render, in the text, 'I am straitened,' in the margin 'I am pained'; Liddell and Scott render, 'I am confined,

constrained, troubled, distressed—that is, then, *by* both. ‘Having a desire,’ is having the (definite article, emphatic) INTENSE DESIRE; Gr. *epithumia*, elsewhere translated lust, inordinate desire. Next two Gr. words are omitted in our English version, though important in the connection, *eis*, for, and *to*, the; the definite article with the infinitive ‘to depart and to be,’ being used as a noun governed by the preposition *eis*, ‘for the departing and being with Christ.’ Then *gar*, for, is omitted in our version, ‘for [this were] by much far better.’ The passage then rightly reads: ‘Which I shall choose for myself I know not. For I am straitened [troubled] by both; (having the *intense desire* for the departing and being with Christ, for very much better is this.)’

“Now, then, what does ‘the departing’ mean? It is generally believed that by it Paul here refers to his death, as in 2 Tim. 4: 6. But this is an evident error, for that would conflict with what goes before. Paul had just said, whether life or death he knows not which he would choose, for he is troubled by both. The one brings him continual trial. (See 1 Cor. 4: 13; 2 Cor. 5: 4.) The other, our ‘enemy,’ robs him of life, which all are loth to lose. Will he in the next breath so stultify himself, as to say that his intense desire, his earnest longing, is for death,—is for one of the two which are a trouble to him? That cannot be.

“What then does he refer to? We shall see. An old man, Paul the aged, alone in his Roman prison (for in dismissing Timothy to the Philippian church, he sadly tells them (chapter 2: 20), he has no one like-minded, all seeking their own, not the things of Jesus Christ), his personal work through such a life of unparalleled labor, suffering, infirmity, nearly or quite done, just now waiting (chap. 2: 23) to ‘see how it will go with him,’ he says, it matters not whether life or death be before him, for himself he would not care to choose. But no one may think

him a disappointed, discouraged man. In one of those parentheses of which his writings are full (e.g., see Eph. 2,) he declares the great hope which sustains him. There is one thing he longs for, one thing upon his heart (as the composition of Gr. *epithumia* expresses); it is the departing and being with Christ. There is a departing which every man shrinks from, to that land of darkness and forgetfulness (Ps. 88: 12), where no man can work (Jno. 9: 4), or praise the Lord (Ps. 115: 17), the returning to his earth (Ps. 46: 4); it is that death which has passed upon all men, for that all have sinned, Rom. 5: 12. But it is not for this he has the intense desire; it is for the—note, how the one definite article binds together the thought of the two infinitives as one compound, inseparable idea—for the departing and being with Christ, that departing which to his mind is inseparably associated with the manifested presence of his Lord.

“When is this to be? Need we repeat Paul’s own words? He tells us, 1 Thess. 4: 16, 17, that the Lord himself shall descend from heaven, to raise to life his sleeping saints, and to change those still living, bestowing upon all their spiritual bodies, in which they ‘will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and so will they ever be with the Lord.’ ‘With these words’ he urged the Thessalonians to ‘comfort one another.’ Thus did he comfort himself in that lonely Roman prison, looking forward to that promised appearing of his Lord, when he should receive the sought for immortality, and when he could be with the Master he had loved and served so well.

“That was something to be intensely longed for, ‘for very far better’ were it than present life or than death. ‘By the two he is confined and oppressed, but he has the intense desire for the departing and being with Christ’—for that great day of reward when, forever departed from sorrow and sin, he will forever be with the Lord.”

How then is immortality attainable? We answer by the special gift and bestowment of God.

This same apostle Paul who "desired to depart and be with Christ," says, "The wages of sin is *death*, but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord." Rom. 6: 23.

If eternal life is the "*gift of God*" then it cannot be *innate*; we cannot *naturally* possess it. And if it is a gift *through* Jesus Christ our Lord, it could not have been *bestowed* at man's creation; but must come, if it comes at all, as a consequence of Christ's redemptive work. And so Paul declares that God will "*render*" "eternal life" to those who "*seek*" for it. Rom. 2: 6-7.

By what means will saints obtain eternal life? By the same means that our Lord obtained it. He (Jesus), "I am he that liveth, and was *dead*; and, behold I am alive for evermore." Rev. 1: 18.

"I am he that *was dead*." And this he said without qualification or limitation; leaving us the only possible conclusion that he (Christ) was really dead in the most inclusive personal sense. And had not God raised him up (1 Thess. 1: 10) he would have *remained* dead forever. And so dead men are dead, in the most inclusive personal sense: and if—as Paul argues in 1 Cor. 15th chapter—there shall be no resurrection, then all dead men will remain dead forever.

"And, behold, I am alive forevermore." Now, so really and fully as he was alive, so really and fully he had been dead. The antithesis is complete. How did Christ come to be alive after he was dead? By

**RESURRECTION.** God raised him up from the dead. By resurrection from the dead Christ was made alive, to die no more. So by *resurrection* will dead saints attain to "eternal life;" and in no other way. If the dead rise not then they that sleep in Jesus "*are perished*." "Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ. And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith. That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect; but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus." Phil. 3: 8-12.

How then does "eternal life," as the "*gift of God*," come "*through* Jesus Christ our Lord?"

Resurrection is a chief and momentous result of Christ's redemptive work. So important that had God left him in death the whole superstructure of redemption and restitution would have fallen to pieces. So he said, "I am the resurrection and the *life*." That is, the resurrection and eternal life by resurrection, comes in consequence of Christ's resurrection to eternal life. "*Because he lives we shall live also.*"

How grandly and gloriously are "life and immortality brought to light through the gospel." 2 Tim. 1: 10. Out of the gospel, and Christ in the gospel, there is no immortality—no eternal life. "Death has passed upon all men." We cannot escape the Adamic penalty. But through the dark "valley and shadow of death" serenely shines the clear light of "life and immortality" through Christ, who is the Alpha and Omega of the gospel.

All men will be made alive from the dead. "There will be a resurrection both of the just and of the unjust." But only believers in Christ will be raised to "die no more."

The true Bible doctrine we believe to be: Future life through Christ alone; and "eternal life" the "*gift of God*" to believers only; and *that through Christ*, by means of resurrection from the dead.

Eternal life is within the reach of every living human being. Glorious truth!

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE WICKED—THEIR ULTIMATE DESTINY.

The doom of unrepentant sinners! Awful theme! Its solemnity staggers conception. A grandeur of sadness and terror surrounds it which makes curious thought and *speculative inquiry* profane, and brings us to the bar of God's unerring Oracles for an answer. Let us stand with bowed heads in presence of the inexorable law of *life and death*, and trace with prayerful caution the omens of eternal destiny.

The human race has been awarded two royal opportunities. First, eternal being with unending blessedness in the first Adam. That sadly, appallingly failed—failed wholly through fault of the first pair. They were able to stand, but free to fall. But in the primal transgression the progeny of the united head of the race had no voice, shared no responsibility. And because the offspring of the unfaithful pair were involved in a terrible calamity for which they were in no way at fault, the gracious God, in his infinite and sovereign goodness, provided a *second* royal opportunity in the gift, person and work of Christ, the second Adam.

The atonement came in, covering the *results of*

the Adamic failure in so far as to assure deliverance from the Adamic death penalty, by resurrection from the dead, to be *preceded* by a *probationary* period co-extensive with human life; thus constituting all the race free and responsible subjects of God's moral government, each for himself, with future destiny, whether of eternal life or second and eternal death, set before them as a question of personal choice.

That all human beings, of sufficient intelligence to render them capable of moral obligation, are subjects of God's moral government during the probationary period, none will deny. And it irresistibly follows, therefore, that all such probationers must be held to answer to God, and to be punished, if "found wanting"; not for the sin of the first man, but for the "deeds done in the body"; for what force or sense could there be in *probation* if there were to be no reckoning at its close? Probation cannot, in the nature of things, be eternal. And if there is to be no hearing, no awards when it terminates; then it would be without meaning or possible advantage.

It is plain that there can be neither rewards nor punishments in this life for probationary conduct, for probation *runs* till the *end* of earthly life; to the latest moment of earthly existence, *including* the very last responsible act and thought; leaving not so much as one moment's time for judgment and awards this side the grave. Nor can the Adamic death be the proper and inclusive punishment for probationary sinning, because the righteous and the

wicked are alike subject to that calamity; and, further, because *all* are provided—in the redemptive economy—with certain and unconditional deliverance from the original death penalty by resurrection. "There shall be a resurrection of the dead, *both* of the just and of the unjust." Acts 24: 15. It is, therefore, certain that the *destiny* of the wicked will not culminate in the Adamic or first death; but that they will be raised from the dead and be brought to judgment, as otherwise they would wholly escape the punishment due them for their rejection of offered redemption through Christ, and for spending and completing their probation in rebellion against God.

And to this the Scriptures bear the most positive testimony. "And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there *shall* be a resurrection of the dead, *both* of the *just* and of the *UNJUST*." Acts 24: 15. And, "Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming, in the which *all* that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; *they* that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and *they* that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." John 5: 28, 29.

Thus it is as certain as positive inspired declaration can make it that *all* the dead will be raised up and brought before the bar of God for "righteous judgment."

But how different will the awakening of the two classes be! The wicked will come up in their native corruptness, untouched by the cleansing blood of the Lamb; unhealed of the deadly virus of actual

sin; outside the covenant of grace; self-excluded from the promise and bond of eternal life; heirs of the second death by virtue of deliberate probationary choice; unfit for heaven; useless in God's universe; children of wrath; doomed to utter destruction. Both mercy and justice will concur in blotting out the very remembrance of their names.

But the righteous, having made choice, through probation, of Christ and immortality, will awake to glory, honor, eternal life. "For he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." Gal. 6:8.

But if further proof were needed that the destiny of the wicked will not culminate in the Adamic or first death, a glance at the awful judgment scene will silence all lingering doubt. "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory; and before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats; and he shall set the sheep on the right hand, but the goats on the left." Matt. 25:31-33.

In the face of such a description as this, who can doubt, who dares deny, that the wicked will be present at the "great assize"? Can we believe that the Neros, the Robespierres, the Lucrezia Borgias, the bloody Inquisitors, the blasphemous skeptics of our time, will elude justice, and baffle God's moral government by refusing to obey the judgment trumpet summoning them from their dusty beds of corruption

to answer at the bar of the Crucified One, whose disciples were the victims of their bloodthirsty and lecherous carnivals, and whose holy name was the butt of their ribald jests? Will the Woman sitting on the "scarlet colored beast, full of names of blasphemy," who made "the inhabitants of the earth drunk with the wine of her fornication"; and who was herself "drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus"—will *she* escape the "righteous judgment of God" by taking refuge in the silence of the Adamic death? If all the murderers and workers of abominations—the fiends in human form, from Cain's day to the end of time—are to be allowed to slip out of existence and never be brought to judgment, thus baffling the "*terrors of the Lord*," and defying the universal law of justice, then it is not irreverent to say that God has no moral government over men. But the doctrine that incorrigible sinners will find their full deserts in the dreamless silence and quiet slumber of the grave, is too palpably false, too shocking to the common moral sense, too scripturally untenable to require protracted consideration.

What then will be the final *destiny* of the wicked? We answer, they will be raised from the dead, when Christ shall come, to be judged and punished, according to their personal deserts, in vindication of the righteous government of God; their punishment culminating in the "second death"—*final and utter destruction*.

But ought not incorrigible sinners to suffer, and will they not suffer, eternal torment? All the rea-

sons why sinners should be brought to judgment and be punished, each "according as his work hath been," unite in all their force *against the eternity of suffering*. For the very *justice* which demands the adequate and *righteous* punishment of offenders, *protects* those same offenders against *unrighteous* and undeserved punishment. And no possible amount or turpitude of *limited* transgression can deserve *unlimited*—*UNENDING*—retribution. By the very essential element of justice, *finite* and therefore limited, sinning cannot deserve *infinite, unlimited* suffering. There must be a point *somewhere* at which justice must be satisfied. "Eternal torment" is an awful handwriting to set over against the greatest *possible* wickedness of a brief human life;—a handwriting that staggers the moral sense, and turns our inquiry to the nature and character of God.

There can be no vindictiveness in the God of all goodness. The righteous Judge and merciful Father can visit on his enemies no more punishment than the vindication of his law and government, and the maintenance of his sovereign power demand. To allow sin to go unpunished would subvert his universal government; to torment offenders vindictively would impeach his goodness. The *eternal torture* of a young creature, whose chief sin was that living just long enough to recognize the offer of mercy she neglected to accept it, would call the universe to arms.

What, then, will be the doom of the ungodly! We repeat, they will be held to answer at the last judgment for their desecration of the gracious pro-

bation given to them; their rejection of Christ their loving and only Saviour, and for all their personal sins; and, finally, they will be "punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power." 2 Thess. 1: 9.

In saying this we are not indifferent to the fact that the Scriptures contain a considerable number of texts which, taken alone, seem to teach the eternal suffering of the lost. But over against these there is an overwhelming preponderance of Bible expressions which are capable of one meaning only—the final *destruction* of the impenitent. As an example we give the following: "They shall "die." Ezek. 18: 4. They shall suffer "death." Rom. 6: 23. They shall suffer the "second death." Rev. 20: 14, 15. They shall be "destroyed." Psa. 145: 20. They shall suffer "destruction." Job 21: 30. They shall "perish." Psa. 37: 20. They shall be "burned up." Matt. 3: 12. They shall "not be." Psa. 37: 10. They shall come to an "end." Psa. 37: 38. They shall be "consumed." Psa. 37: 20. They shall be "devoured." Psa. 21: 9. They shall be "slain." Psa. 62: 3. They shall be "no more." Psa. 104: 35. They shall be "blotted out." Psa. 69: 28. They shall be "ground to powder." Matt. 21: 44. They shall see "corruption." Gal. 6: 8. They shall be "rooted up." Prov. 2: 22. They shall be as "nought." Isa. 41: 12.

Now what can all these expressions signify if the wicked are innately immortal? If they cannot "die" any more than God can die; if they cannot by any possibility be "blotted out"; if "fire" cannot "con-

*sume*" them; if the "second death" is really eternal life, in pain; if to be "burned up" is to exist forever; if to be "destroyed" is to be "more alive than before," then what meaning is there in words?

And, moreover, there is a large class of inspired utterances applied to the end of the ungodly which convey very definitely the idea of *perishability, destructibility*. Sinners are compared to *chaff*. Matt. 3: 12. To *stubble*. Mal. 4: 1. To *tares*. Matt. 13: 40. To *thorns and briars*. Heb. 6: 8.

Are these not strange words to be applied to indestructible beings? to persons who are constitutionally, irreversibly immortal? Are "chaff," "stubble," "ashes," fit emblems of durability, imperishableness, eternity?

We feel that a careful reading of all God has uttered concerning the wicked will make it impossible to resist the conclusion that in the end the ungodly will cease to be. And why should we desire to resist such a conclusion? What reason can there be, in the nature of things, that the holy God should torture his enemies *forevermore*? Surely lost sinners will not *desire* to live forever in unspeakable agony of suffering. "Eternal burnings" were no coveted boon to the damned. As future punishment will not be, cannot be reformatory; as the suffering ones could look forward to no possible relief, they could not crave unending existence in ceaseless sorrow. If, therefore, they shall be kept alive in eternal suffering it must be solely at the will and pleasure of the just God.

But which attribute of the divine nature could

find pleasure in the burning agonies of a horde of helpless wretches, longing for extinction as the only relief from their unconsuming pains? Would not Mercy cry out in irrepressible pity? and Justice, satiated, say, It is enough?

And, moreover, the endless suffering of the unsaved would defeat the primal purpose of God in the creation of our world. When, looking on his finished work, he said of earth and sky, of man and beast, of tree and flower and bird, of all things he had made, it is "*good*," he shadowed forth his tender, glorious thought of a pure, sweet, harmonious race and world. And for a time all was peace, all was joy. But sin came and blasted the Edenic beauty; blasted the race, the realm; blasted all God had in his goodness done; and the bitter curse fell on all things.

Is the curse never to be removed? Are sin and sinners and suffering to be eternal, irremediable facts? Is rebellion and defiant blasphemy never to be silenced? Will the universe never be pure again? Is it not said, "And there shall be no more curse?" But how can the *curse* cease, if cursing by the myriad lips of lost souls is to be heard forever?

It is not conceivable that, under his sovereign government of the universe, the holy God would set apart a realm for the eternal abode and suffering of a vast multitude of miserable creatures in whose natures every sense of purity and loyalty is dead; to whom there is but one possibility left, and that interminable anguish. Or if so, where is that realm

to be? We know where the home of the saints will be. The blessed Redeemer and the holy Father have plainly told us where the ransomed hosts will congregate. The glorious land that shall resound with song and shout and everlasting joy is well described in the sacred Books. But where is that realm of darkness, despair and woe whence will rise unceasing, piteous prayers for death, that sorrow and pain may find welcome respite in eternal silence—but all in vain? The new earth is promised to the saints—the “kingdom under the whole heavens”—wherein the just shall dwell and reign with Christ “forever and ever.” Where will Satan and the wicked reign?—reign in rebellion and blasphemy? *Where?* We bend our ears to the Sacred Volume, but no answer comes. The holy Word is silent—silent because in the “restitution” no spot, in all the realm of God, will be abandoned to the reign of evil and the supremacy of corruption. No howling pandemonium, hideous with the groans of tortured sinners and the blasphemous imprecations of chained demons, will be allowed to break the harmony and peace of the new creation.

Let us thank God that evil is not eternal; that holiness is the law of God’s universe, and sin only a temporary innovation; that there will come a moment when the last breath of rebellion will have been quenched, the last dark plague-spot will have been expunged, and the last cry of pain will have died away, the last tear of anguish will have fallen, the last throb of sorrow will have been hushed, and lost, wretched sinners—a curse to themselves and

to the universe—having neither *right* nor *desire* to live forever, will be remanded to the dust and silence from whence they came, while justice and mercy will clasp hands over the oblivion of their sufferings and their shame.

“And **EVERY CREATURE** which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and *all* that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever.” Rev. 5: 13.

The grand *refrain* of peace and joy will be *universal*. “Sorrow and sighing shall *flee away*.” Our long ruined world will be *itself again*. God’s primal purpose will be re-enthroned.

## CHAPTER IX.

## THE ETERNAL ABODE OF RANSOMED SAINTS.

In some beatific realm of God's great universe, at a time not very remote, a vast throng of redeemed and resurrected saints will be assembled—all made white in the blood of the Lamb, decked in immaculate beauty, aglow with the first impulses of immortal being, amazed and ravished by the splendors of their everlasting home, fitted up and adorned by the Prince of their salvation. WHERE will it be?

Pausing not now in vain attempts to conceive the grandeur of their first emotions as they drink in the glory beaming from the THRONE, and radiating from ten thousand times ten thousand shining faces; or the mighty rapture that will sway the numberless hosts as the first glad refrain of deliverance rolls in swelling volume over the flowering plains of bliss,—we grasp at once the thrilling question, *Where will be* the glorious place made ready by their Priest and King for the ransomed of his love?

In this interesting inquiry three things will guide our thought: God's manifested primal purpose in the creation and endowment of the human race; the methods of redemption and immortality, and the direct statement of the Sacred Scriptures.

A glance at the great Father's completed work,

as it stood arrayed in the effulgence of Infinite creative wisdom and skill, resplendent with beauty and bathed in light and love, will unmistakably reveal the divine ideal of our world and race.

First came our physical universe, adorned with light and life, and garnished with grasses and herbs and fruitful trees,—a vast creation, pure, beautiful, grand, suited to rural life and peace and joy, as if fashioned for some happy occupants of a high cast of being. Then, when the great habitation was completed, with fadeless flowers for a carpet, and the serene skies for a covering; with the river of life, clear as crystal, for a beverage, and ever golden fruits for sustenance; with the numerous animal races for beauty, pleasure and majesty; with the stars for tapers, and the birds of variegated plumage for song; with angels for neighbors, and the benign heavenly Father for ruler—then came the happy progenitors of our race, pure, beautiful and loving, and on them was bestowed in royal patrimony the earth and seas, and all things that in them were, with kind injunction from their Creator's lips to “have dominion; to multiply and fill the earth with a progeny as fair and happy as themselves.

This picture, so poorly drawn, is true in fact to the divine purpose in giving birth to nature and the human race. Man was intended to be what he was and what he is—a physical being, with high intelligence, with moral faculties, but still a material being suited to material conditions, and to be the head of a material world. But the successful invasion and seduction of Satan has temporarily intercepted

the divine intention. But the great God has not abandoned his primal purpose, nor will the satanic strategy permanently succeed. The plan of redemption will eventuate in the recovery of our material universe from satanic domination, and its restoration to its primal conditions; and our marred and blasted creation shall once more blush in Edenic beauty, with *redeemed* man in full fruition of his ancient immunities and glories; and EARTH, cleansed from the *virus* of the curse, regarnished and put in its native attire, will be the future and unchanging home of ransomed saints.

The renewed race will spend their endless days in the land of their nativity; in the "country" given to Adam, lost in the transgression, promised to Abraham, predicted by "all the holy prophets," purchased and assured by Christ, claimed by Peter and seen by St. John, in its painless, tearless and deathless restfulness and peace.

"The splendors of that earth so bright,  
No language can describe;  
The broad-spread fields of living green,  
Where gentle waters glide.  
Rich groves, with trees of golden fruit,  
And flowers of sweet perfume,  
The towering pine, the box, the fir,  
With deserts all in bloom."

But for confirmation of these views let us consult the Holy Oracles. In Gen. 17: 8, we find the following sweeping promise made of God to Abraham: "And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the *land* wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan. for an everlasting possession."

In commenting upon this scripture Manasseh Ben Israel says: "It is plain that Abram and the patriarchs did not possess the land; it follows therefore that they must be raised from the dead in order to enjoy the promised good." And Stephen declared concerning this very promise: "And he gave him [Abraham] none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on; yet he promised that he would give it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him, when as yet he had no child." Acts 7: 5. And this promise included *all* saints, for Paul said: "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's *seed*, and heirs according to the *promise*." Gal. 3: 29.

That was God's bond to Abraham and his "seed after him"—*all saints*—to deliver into their possession and occupancy "*all the land*." But Abraham has slept, with his beloved Sarah, in their Machpelah sepulchre for many generations, and the *promised land* still groans under the blasting weight of the curse, and languishes under the alien's tread, longing to be delivered. For, as Ben Israel said, and as Stephen in his time affirmed, so we now declare, that neither Abraham nor his seed have yet possessed the "*land*." The patriarch is dead and buried, and his seed are "pilgrims and strangers" even unto this day.

This promise cannot be spiritually interpreted, for regeneration and the work of grace do not consist in the transfer of real estate—the bestowment of *land*. This was a *Magna Charta* promise; and it must have a literal fulfillment; and Stephen, in his dying defence of the rights of God's elect, declared that up to

his time that promise had in no sense been fulfilled.

When will it be accomplished? We answer, in the "*Restitution*." When the curse shall have been removed, and all the earth shall be one vast, grand Canaan; when the saints—Abraham and Abraham's seed—shall have been raised from the dead, so that they *can* go in and "possess the land"; then will the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob honor his well-remembered promise and oath, and bestow on his servant Abraham and all the "meek" the long desired heritage—the whole land, the sweet "*New Earth*," beaming in beauty under the smiling "*New Heavens*."

"The world shall burn, and from its ashes spring  
New heavens and earth, wherein the just shall dwell,  
And, after all their tribulation long,  
See golden days."

Having thus discovered the source and certainty of the saints' title to an "inheritance that fadeth not away," it is easy to trace its tenure through all the Sacred Writings.

"The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir tree, the pine tree and the box together, to *beautify* the place of my sanctuary." Isa. 60: 18. This is a landscape picture drawn from the foreseen splendors of the new creation.

"Thy people also shall be all righteous; they shall inherit the *land* forever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified." Isa. 60: 21. Rich glimpse this of the happy inhabitants of the "*country*" toward which all the patriarchs looked, and for which they longed! Heb. 11: 13-15.

As the ages sweep on and empires come and go, and revolutions change thrones and sceptres, and earthly titles and possessions are displaced and forgotten, the glorious Magna Charta of the saints, the Abrahamic title deed in fee simple, is still preserved, fresh and clear. And Daniel, well down in the lapse of centuries, repeats the ancient promise: "And the kingdom, and dominion, and the *greatness* of the kingdom *under the whole heaven*, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High." Dan. 7: 27.

Remember, not *above* the heavens, nor *in* the heavens; not among the stars, nor in the ethereal expanse, but "*UNDER the whole heaven*."

This is the same old Abrahamic *land-grant*. Its boundaries are set at the poles, including "all the ends of the earth." Its fair and fadeless domain will embrace the *now* "whole groaning creation," *then* "delivered" and re-Edenized.

"O *when*, Almighty Lord,  
Shall these glad scenes arise,  
To verify thy word,  
And bless our wondering eyes?  
That *earth* with all her tongues may raise  
United songs of endless praise."

The royal singer of Israel touched his lyre to the golden hope of long and happy days in the *land* of "milk and honey." And thus he sang: "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the *EARTH* for thy possession." "His soul shall dwell at ease, and his seed shall *inherit the earth*." "Those that wait

upon the Lord shall inherit the *earth*." "The heaven, even the heavens are the Lord's; but the *earth* hath he given to the children of men."

King David foresaw the promised glory of Mount Zion when from the final fires of dissolution our world shall emerge, freed from the usurper's scourge, and, under the peaceful reign of the rightful "heir of David's throne," shall be given—a royal heritage—to the "people of the saints of the Most High."

So all the ancient prophets and kings beheld, lying beyond the mists of the intervening ages, the new creation scenes, and longed to grasp the "promised possession."

"And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the *promise*; God having provided—*foreseen*—some better thing for us, that they without *us* should not be made perfect." Heb. 11: 39, 40. They could not have entered into the "rest of the people of God," for the purchased possession" was not then ready to be delivered; the "mansions" were not "*prepared*."

The entrance of the ancient Israel into the old typical Canaan was not fragmentary—not one by one—but *en masse*. So will the universal Israel—"all Israel"—go into the Canaan "under the whole heavens" *all together*—in one vast throng—with banners and song and shoutings; marching to the music not of Moses and Miriam, but of "Moses and the Lamb." Israel after the flesh will have no *pre-occupancy* of the everlasting Mount Zion.

*We shall go home together.* The ancient worthies

who saw in rapt visions of prophecy the new creation splendors, and heard the far distant murmurs of resurrection and restitution anthems; the martyr host who grandly sleep on their fields of blood, waiting for the avenging day; the "little flock" of the "latter times," who, patient under the scorn-barbed jeerings of a scoffing generation, stand firm for the honor of God's name and the truthfulness of his "word of promise"—the whole vast multitude which "no man can number," from every age and every land, shall sweep "through the gates into the city," an unbroken column,—angels for escort, harps of gold for music, palms of victory for banners, sparkling diadems for badges, and for a chorus songs of everlasting deliverance.

*We shall go home together.*

The future and changeless home of saints, so well assured by the promise and oath of God, and so variously and enchantingly described in the ancient Scriptures, is exultingly claimed by the writers of the Gospels, the Epistles and the Apocalypse.

The Saviour, in enunciating the great principles of his gospel, in the sermon on the mount, did not omit pointing out in the most definite phrase the *place* wherein his hunted and peeled church shall find at last sweet and unmolested repose and ample possessions. "Blessed are the *meek*," he said, "for they shall inherit the *EARTH*." Not the limitless, ethereal expanse, in which on tireless wing the redeemed shall float as the elysian breezes may waft them, without locality or community; but the *earth*, the material globe which was fashioned for man at the beginning—the *earth* shall they inherit.

The Master's words are copious. "*Inherit.*" Not be allowed to live in it by mere sufferance, as now; but they shall possess the land; it shall be their "country," and no alien's foot shall ever press its virgin soil; no Ishmaelite shall invade its peaceful enclosures.

"*Inherit.*" The new earth home will not be achieved by the sword; it will not come by the seizure of arms; but by rightful tenure. "If children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ."

This has not yet come. Until this day the children of God are "pilgrims and strangers," having "no continuing city." No country, no State, no city, no corner of the earth is yet in the possession of the saints. "The whole world lieth in the wicked one." But in the "restitution" our Lord's words or promise—"The meek shall inherit the earth"—will be verified; and the saints' possession will be complete, universal, inalienable.

"I go to prepare a place for you." John 14: 3. A PLACE." Not a state, not a spiritual condition merely, but a place, a locality, a country, a city. "For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country." Heb. 11: 14.

And the Saviour's pledge of a literal and local residence for the redeemed, in the world to come, was vigorously grasped by the great apostle, and set before the faith and hope of the church as the shining prize toward which she should turn her tear-dimmed, anxious eyes, in her sanguinary struggles with a usurping devil and an alien world. Hear

his exulting words ringing across the bloody fields of the ages—"Which is the earnest [pledge] of our inheritance until the *redemption* of the *purchased possession.*" Eph. 1: 14.

The "purchased possession" is the whole groaning creation. "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now." Rom. 8: 22.

The "*redemption* of the *purchased possession*" will come in the *deliverance* of the "*groaning creation*" from the blight and corruption of the curse under which all nature writhes and struggles, waiting for redemption and restitution.

The physical creation—man's lost estate—was included in the purchase of the Saviour's death and blood.

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath and buyeth that field." Matt. 13: 44.

The "*treasure*" which Jesus found was *man*—ruined, corroded, corrupted, but of priceless value. The "*field*" was the whole creation: "The field is the world." And he found that the treasure and the field belonged together; in their very nature, inseparable. But not to be foiled—though it cost him "*all he had*," his blood, his life—the blessed Son of God purchased the *whole*, the "*treasure*," the "*field*" and all. His title deed covers man and man's forfeited estates—the "*whole creation*"—with all the rights, titles, immunities and appurtenances thereunto belonging; to him (Christ) and his heirs.

(Joint heirs with Christ), for their sole use and behoof forever.

And so the saints, when their redemption is completed, will regain the ancient homestead. And the ransomed of the Lord will spend their endless day in peaceful and joyous possession of the very earth and soil whereon they knelt and prayed, wept and suffered; the very hill-sides and valleys to whose silent embrace they committed, with breaking hearts, the cold forms of their precious dead; the very shores and streams once reddened with the blood of their martyrs; and their children, robed in immortal brightness, with flower-crowns on their little princely and queenly heads, shall play in gay delight on the very spots where once they slept in their little caskets "low in the ground." And where stood the shameful, streaming cross, shrouded with the gloom of grim Golgotha, the royal city—great capital of the new earth—shall fling open her jewelled gates, revealing to the gaze of the enraptured throng the glorious person, crown and sceptre of their mighty King—once the Crucified, now the Lord of lords.

"O the amazing change!  
A world created new!  
My thoughts with transport range  
The lovely scene to view.  
Where pointed brambles grew,  
Entwined with horrid thorn,  
Gay flowers, forever new,  
The painted fields adorn;  
The lily there, and blushing rose,  
In union fair their sweets disclose."

**And Peter, not to be outdone by Paul, the great**

constitutional expounder of the gospel, dipped his pen in the inspiration of new-creation scenes, and sent cheer to the church at large in these glowing words: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time."

1 Pet. 1: 3-5.

The terms "incorruptible," "undefiled," and "fadeth not away," as applied to "inheritance," must have a literal meaning; and especially so as Peter makes the inheritance dependent upon the resurrection from the dead. And in his second epistle he is still more explicit, and says: "Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth." 2 Pet. 3: 13. The phrase "new heavens and a new earth" cannot be taken in a figurative sense, because the new heavens and new earth are to follow and take the *place* of "the heavens and the earth which are now"; and the present heavens and earth are surely literal, and, according to St. Peter, are "reserved unto fire."

The apostle's meaning clearly is, that our mundane system is to be renovated by fire, and to be followed by a new or renewed physical world—new heavens and new earth—and that the new creation will be the future abode of saints; for he adds, "*wherein dwelleth* righteousness," or righteous ones.

Thus Peter, Paul, Christ, Daniel, Isaiah, David and Abraham unite in solemn declaration that ransomed saints shall have and possess a "COUNTRY"—even the whole creation, renewed and restored to its Edenic conditions. Can these witnesses be invalidated? Is the title good? Will it stand, unimpeached, the revolution of the last day? What think ye?

Let us turn to the last of the sacred books—God's final words to man on earth.

The *Revelation* is the *unveiling* of this world's latest history and the opening scenes of the world to come; the passing away of the present order of things, and the ushering in of the eternal state and polity; the abolition of wickedness and all evil agencies, and the succession of righteousness and peace; the dissolution of nature, in its present aspects, and the rejuvenation of the heavens and the earth, and all that in them is. "Behold, I make *all things new.*"

The Patmos visions close up with a rapid succession of events so solemn, so grand, so glorious, that the strongest mind may well be awestruck at their recital.

Overwhelmed with amazement blended with transport that he was only able to bear by the aid of special divine power, the exiled apostle "saw a great white throne, and Him that sat on it." And at the presence of the *throne*, and before the *face* of Him that sat on it, "the heavens and the earth fled away." The aerial and the starry heavens "departed as a scroll when it is rolled together"; and

the earth melting with "fervent heat" shrank back into molten chaos. And, swiftly following, he "saw the dead, small and great, stand before God." The dead of every age and every class, including those who will undergo a change equivalent to death (1 Cor. 15: 51); all the vast multitude of human beings, from Adam to the latest born of earth, he saw standing before the great "judgment seat." He saw the angels—the scribes of heaven, who keep God's "book of remembrance"—bring forward and open the books. And he heard the judgment of the "dead," based on the "things" "written in the books." He heard the awful sentence fall from the lips of the Judge: "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire." The "wailing" and the "gnashing of teeth" he heard, as the despairing throng took leave of light and love and hope and life. He saw grim death and black-visaged, insatiable *hades* cast into the flaming "lake"—the consuming fires of the "second death."

And when all was still, he heard with joyful ears the sentence of the just break from the lips of the smiling Judge: "Come, ye blessed of my Father"; and, filling all the vast expanse, and far up into the heaven of heavens, rolled the mighty ever swelling anthem of the ransomed, as from the ruins of the *old* creation emerged the splendors of the *new*.

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for

her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away. And He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful." Rev. 21: 1-5.

What world is this of which St. John says such wonderful things? Who are these blissful creatures with tearless eyes, deathless forms and shining brows? and whence came they? What royal race is this, that "God himself" should "be with them, and be their God"? What favored *land* is this, ne'er seen by mortal eyes, ne'er blighted by a curse, ne'er saddened by pain or touched by sorrow, ne'er shadowed by the black wing of death? What *skies* are these, ne'er darkened by a cloud, nor riven by red lightning's flash? What *shores* are these, ne'er shaken by earthquake shock or blackened with the wrecks of angry seas? What mighty *empire* may this be, with metropolis built by the mighty God and sent down from heaven?

These scenes are surely not of earth. These storm-fretted skies of ours never smiled on picture such as this, since *mortal* years began.

Lift up your heads and hands, O ransomed of the Lord! Break into song and shout, all living

tongues! Awake and sing, pale lips of the dark valley! Join, seraphs of the skies! Let heaven and earth resound with hallelujahs! This is Paradise restored; the promised new creation; the *land bonded* to Abraham; the "*kingdom under* the whole heavens; the "*field*" purchased by our rightful Prince; the sweet New Earth and New Heavens predicted by Isaiah, sung by David, assured by Christ, claimed by Peter, and seen by John. This is God's own picture of the HOME of the saints, and of the saints AT HOME.

"The storms are done,

And the last breaking wave has spent itself.

The winds are dying into peace, and morn  
Smiles down upon me from the hills of home.

Life's weather-broken barque has safely reached  
The long-sought bay; the worn-out keel at length  
Grazes the strand. I leap to land, and find  
Myself at last upon the stormless shore."

## CHAPTER X.

### THE SCEPTER OF THE SON OF DAVID.

It was the thought of God that the human race should be ruled by a prince of its own blood. Eden was not put under a foreign throne. No angel or archangel was set at the head of our creation. The scepter of the world was placed in the hand of the first man. Universal dominion was vested in Adam the first. Had he maintained allegiance to his Creator he would have remained the head of all creatures and things under heaven and in the seas, without succession.

But the satanic invasion came, and man's "dominion" was swept away. Nature became alien to man, and man became alien to God. But the heavenly Father did not abandon our world to the supremacy of the vile usurper, but instantly promised a Redeemer, and successor to the forfeited dominion, in the person of the second Adam, the Saviour, the Emmanuel. From the blood of our fallen queen-mother, begotten by the Holy Ghost, there was to arise, in the fulness of time, a royal Son—Son of man and Son of God—who should take up the gage of battle where the first Adam so ignominiously fell, and join issue with the bold invader for the repossession of the lost domain and the headship of the race.

The long and fierce struggle and the final result were foreshadowed in those early words of God to the serpent, uttered in full view of the faded splendors of Eden: "It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."

As the ages wore on, the outlines of the great conflict grew luminous, and kings and prophets fore-saw that one was to come after them whose scepter should be universal. The earliest notes of king David's harp were set to the ultimate principship and glory of the Seed of the woman: "Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion." And, "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." Psa. 2: 6-8.

David was not singing of his own aggrandizement. He knew his kingdom would never become universal. He was chanting the honor and kingship of another, whose dominion should be everlasting, and whose kingdom should fill the whole earth. The echoes of his song touched all the ends and niches of the new creation—the advance refrain of endless jubilee under the peaceful reign of the crowned Nazarene, the Son of David and heir to the throne of Israel.

And to Isaiah's prophetic vision the whole earth became one vast empire. Its many thrones crumbled and disappeared. Its thousand babbling tongues melted into one. Its dismal wastes blossomed as the rose. Its solitary places broke into joyous song. There was no more curse. The reign of peace, promised of God, and long desired by all the good, had come. Death was no more, nor sin,

nor pain, nor night. One kingdom, spreading its benign splendor under the "whole heavens"; one throne, filled by a HUMAN form; one scepter, wielded by a HUMAN hand; one crown, glowing with rarest gems, adorning a *human* brow. The first Adam's successor, the rightful heir of David's throne, the God-man, the King of kings, had come to rule the world in unrivalled glory. "The government" was upon "his shoulders."

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever." Isa. 9: 6, 7.

This is a prophecy of Christ in his regal splendor of universal dominion over ransomed men in the renewed creation—the personal Saviour in his human form literally reigning over the redeemed. And so every prediction in the Old Testament, personal to Jesus, invests him with *kingly* majesty and power.

And the New Testament no less than the Old adorns the name of Christ with ascriptions of royalty and sovereign grandeur. Gabriel, the Premier of Heaven, who came to announce to Mary the approaching incarnation, foresaw the Messianic empire filling the earth as the waters fill the sea; and he approached the astonished young Hebrew woman with—"Hail, thou art highly favored; the Lord is

with thee; blessed art thou among women.... And, behold, thou shalt bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David; and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." Luke 1: 28-33.

And thus the manger-cradle was festooned with the insignia of state—the greatness and glory of the kingdom promised, ages before, to the Son of David. And the star-guided "wise men," who came to do homage to the infant heir to a universal scepter, brought presents which savored of *royalty*,—a fitting tribute to the latent kingship of the Child of Promise.

"Oh, be it ours to bow  
Before that flower-crowned Child,  
Owning his kingship now  
By chant and sacred vow,  
Praise undefiled!

Till, every ill thing fled,  
We with the woodlands sing,  
"Rejoice, the snake is dead!  
Creation lifts its head,  
The *Child* is KING!"

Nor did the Lord Jesus himself hesitate to claim his kingly right and predict his unlimited and everlasting reign. "I appoint unto *you* a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me," he said to his few followers, and through them to all who take his cross and follow him. And when the powers of darkness held seeming sway, and David's heir hung

marred and bleeding on the cross, a traitorous hand struck at his royal title. "Write," said the maddened chief priests to the vacillating Pilate—"Write not the *King* of the Jews; but that *he said*, I am King of the Jews." John 19: 21. But a strange power seized the hand of that supple ruler, and he dared not, could not change a jot or tittle of that majestic superscription. And amid the gloom of nature, and the dying agonies of the Prince of life, full in the face of his defamers, and over the vast jeering throng, flashed out in full-orbed significance the proclamation of his right to Israel's throne and the scepter of all the world. In the hour of his helpless sorrow his Father guarded his crown.

Surely the "Seed of the woman" is entitled to dominion. When there was no eye to pity, nor arm to bring relief, he espoused the lost cause of our world and race. Abnegating the glories of heaven, and sinking to the humility of a servant, he flung himself into the chasm of our woes, and, with the precious boon of his life and blood, purchased our redemption.

He was promised, in reward for his sufferings and shame, a *throne* and a people; and in the assurance of his heirship to power and glory he struggled with unknown grief in the garden, the contempt of men, the fury of devils, and the ignominy of a felon's death. His breaking heart was solaced by the certainty of a throne and kingdom, and the joy of sharing it with those who love him. "Who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the

throne of God." Heb. 12: 2. "But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool." Heb. 10: 12, 13.

As an heir waits for the time when he shall come into possession of his estate, so Jesus waits, expectant, for the kingdom promised to him by his Father. All through the New Testament the kingdom of Christ is freely spoken of, and always as being future, and to be given him at his coming. For example: "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his *appearing and kingdom*; preach the Word." 2 Tim. 4: 1.

All the New Testament writers grasp with great distinctness and force the prophetic idea that the first Adam's loss of headship over nature and over the human race is to come back in the second Adam, with added certainty and magnificence; and throughout the Gospels, Epistles and the Revelation, the Lord Jesus is held up as the divinely-appointed and everlasting King of saints and head of the ransomed race; and the renewed earth is clearly pointed out as the *place of his kingdom*.

But besides his title to the *first dominion* as successor of the first Adam, our Lord has another *tenure* of universal kingship by virtue of *heirship* to the "*throne of his father David*." Let us trace, briefly, this ancient claim of the Nazarene.

The elegance and splendor of his own royal mansion, contrasted with the tabernacle which contained

the ark of God, pained the heart of king David; and he said to Nathan the prophet, "See now, I dwell in an house of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth within curtains." And David desired to build a house for the Lord.

In response to David's loyalty and piety God made a covenant with him to *perpetuate his throne forever*. And the Lord sent Nathan to say to David, "I took thee from the sheepcote, from following the sheep, to be ruler over my people, over Israel; . . . and have made thee a great name, like unto the great men that are in the earth. Moreover I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as beforetime. . . . Also the Lord telleth thee that he will make *thee* an *house*. And when thy days shall be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish *his kingdom*. He shall build an house for my name, and I will establish the throne of *his kingdom forever*." 2 Sam. 7: 8-13.

This covenant and compact applied primarily to Solomon and the kingdom of David's family; but in a broader and grander sense to the typified heir to David's throne—the Lord Jesus Christ. David and Solomon have slept with their fathers for these many generations, and the ancient throne of Israel has long been vacant; but the Davidic bond is still on record, and of binding force; and, in fulness of time, the scepter shall again wave over the house of Jacob, and over all the world—*forever*.

The 89th Psalm, 20th to 30th verse, is a recognition of God's covenant with David, and unmistakably determines the final heirship to the throne in Christ. And of the Saviour's right to David's throne a strong intimation is given in Isa. 55: 3, 4.

And the prophet Jeremiah is most explicit. He says: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise up unto David a *righteous* Branch, and a *King* shall *reign* and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his day Judah shall be saved, and Israel dwell in safety; and this is his *name* whereby he shall be called, **THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.**" Jer. 23: 5, 6.

Now the appellation, "**The Lord our Righteousness**," can apply to no merely human being. The Hebrew is *Jehovah-tsidke-nu*. There is but one being ever known to man to whom these words belong—our Lord Jesus Christ. And He it is who is to be "raised up *unto* David," and to "*reign and prosper*," and to "*execute justice in the earth*." Thus the heirship to David's throne is, by divine authority, vested in the "*Seed of the woman*," the Son of God.

And what the Old Testament so positively affirms, the New Testament emphatically *re-affirms*. Standing in the synagogue at Antioch, St. Paul, by the Holy Ghost, declared to an audience of Jews, "And when he had removed him [Saul], he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfill all my will. Of this man's **SEED** hath God,

according to his *promise*, raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus." Acts 13: 22, 23.

So it is forever settled that Jesus is the son—"seed"—of David, and rightful heir to the throne and kingdom; and that "the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David; and he shall reign over the house of Jacob *forever*; and of his *kingdom* there shall be *no end*." Luke 1: 32, 33.

Rejoice, O saints of the Most High! Hear it, ye sleepers in the silent valley! Proclaim it, ye who man the watch-towers of Jehovah! A King mightier than David, more glorious than Solomon, shall yet sit on the throne of ancient promise, and reign over the nations of the saved in unrivalled grandeur. The Lord of lords, the King of kings cometh, with ten thousand times ten thousand ransomed and joyous subjects, to rule in peace **FOREVER**.

"All hail the power of Jesus' name!  
Let angels prostrate fall;  
Bring forth the royal diadem,  
And crown him Lord of all!"

Since the gloomy collapse of Zedekiah's unrighteous administration, when Israel fell under the sword of Nebuchadnezzar, the throne of David has been vacant, crownless; the altars of Israel dismantled and silent, and the Urim and Thummim no longer make answer. The glory of the *diadem* has ceased to shine in the face of the nations, and the once royal and dominant people, with neither *head* nor dynasty, have become the scorn of the world.

For many generations there was not even an aspirant for the scepter of Israel. But the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob had not forgotten his *pledge* to David that of *his* "seed" he would raise up a *righteous branch* to rule on his throne forever. And the desolate centuries were often broken by prophetic voices, declarative of a coming heir to the tarnished diadem and the dishonored crown of Jacob.

And one day the streets of Jerusalem suddenly resounded with a great shout of much people, as if a prince were being crowned. The thronging multitudes left their daily toils and ran together as if moved by some new and strange impulse. The object of their demonstration was a humble stranger of Nazareth, riding on an untamed colt. He wore no royal mantle; there was no crown on his meek brow, no scepter in his hand; he raised no voice, claiming homage. But the surging masses, swayed by an uncontrollable joy, and wild with delight, took off their outer garments and spread them in the way; and others plucked branches of the trees and carpeted the ground; and they that went before and they that followed after shouted "HOSANNA! Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. Blessed be the KINGDOM of our father DAVID, that cometh in the name of the Lord: HOSANNA in the HIGHEST. And Jesus entered into Jerusalem and into the temple." Mark 11: 9, 10.

Never, before nor since, was ovation so spontaneous, so heartfelt, so prophetic. It was the irrepressible outburst of a mighty gladness, at the sudden

realization of a long deferred hope. The promised heir of David's long crownless throne was now apparent. The Son of Mary had asserted his claim to the scepter of Israel—*the scepter of the WORLD.*

But our Lord did not then and there begin his reign. When he had entered into the temple and silently surveyed the Holy Place, he retired to the ranks of the common people and resumed his ministerial work; to be followed by the expiatory offering of his own person; to be succeeded by his triumph over death, his ascension to the right hand of power, and his needed advocacy and intercessory office and work.

Our Lord Jesus is not yet King *de facto*. But in divine *title* and *right* and *certainty* of a throne and kingdom, he is King of kings and Lord of lords. He has passed all tests and ordeals without a break in lineage or a failure in power. His right to reign over the house of Jacob and over the whole earth has been solemnly recognized on earth and in heaven. His crown is sure. His kingdom will not be given to another.

#### CHRIST'S REIGN WILL BE PERSONAL.

From birth to ascension Jesus was before the world in the most strictly personal character. Every act of his ministry was literal and visible. The baptism, the temptation, the struggle in the garden, the death, the revival, the ascension, were all real transactions, done in the presence of eye witnesses. He is now at the "right hand of the Majesty on high" in person—for being there in any other sense would constitute no effective intercession. His "com-

*ing*" will be personal, literal, visible (Acts 1: 10, 11), and he will *reign literally and personally.*

King David's reign was personal, and his kingdom was visible. The son of Jesse was no *spectral* prince. He filled no mythical throne. His scepter was not a figure of speech. He ruled a great people, and was master of a great domain. And his *son* and *heir* will inherit, must possess, not merely the name and fame of his father David, but his "*THRONE*" and *KINGDOM*. God has not bequeathed an empty honor to his only Son. The first Adam was head of the whole creation. The "first dominion" stretched from pole to pole. The promise made to Abraham touched the four quarters of the earth. It ran "north and south, east and west." It included "*all the land.*" The "kingdom given to the saints of the Most High" was "*under the whole heavens.*" The heir to such a throne and the ruler over such a kingdom must, in the nature of things, be a personal being, and his reign must be literal and visible.

The Holy Scriptures trace our divine King through the ages of promise, down to his manifestation in the flesh; they note his humility as he lay in his manger-cradle; they record in words of sadness his struggle in the garden, and the agonies of his shameful death; they hallow his transient slumber in a grave of charity; they declare in strains of triumph his victory over death; they describe in majestic phrase his wonderful ascension, binding the laws of nature to his chariot wheels; they herald in rapturous declaration his "coming again" "in power and great glory"; they escort him with voices, hosannas and

angelic retinue back to this earth of ours; and **HERE** they LEAVE him—leave him here, because here he belongs. He is to be the resident King of the new creation.

"And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth." Rev. 5: 9, 10.

As this scripture, together with many others, teaches, the ransomed saints are to *reign on the earth*; and as Christ is to reign with them and over them, he must be personally present. And St. John gives us another new-earth scene, of which the personal Jesus is the central figure: "And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse; but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: and they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads." Rev. 22: 1-4.

This text, taken in connection with Rev. 21: 1-3, makes it certain that Christ's throne—inherited from his father David—will be set up and stand forever in the *capital* of the NEW EARTH. And that will not

be an empty throne. One more glorious than any of Israel's ancient kings will occupy it, whose presence will be as literally personal and visible as that of David or Solomon. "And they—not angels, but redeemed saints—shall *see his face*."

*Here* the Son of God humbled himself and put on our flesh. *Here*, in our own Jordan, he was baptized and inducted into priestly office. In a wilderness of our world he fought the great battle with our seducer and oppressor—and WON. In our own garden of Gethsemane he struggled alone, in his sweat of blood, with the massed powers of darkness—and conquered. His cross stood in this land, and his precious streaming blood moistened and sanctified the bosom of our *earth*. His sepulchre—empty now, thank God—is among us to this day. *Here* he fought. *Here* he fell. *Here* he bled. *Here* his martyrs sleep in their crimson shrouds. *Here* his vile enemies still taunt his followers, and jeer at his name and kingdom. *Here* the cursed and groaning "dominion" cries for deliverance, and refuses to hide the blood of her slain. *Here* his right of empire is denied; and **HERE** he will reign.

On this earth, in this land, under this sun, shall the Nazarene be crowned King of kings and Lord of lords. From these red battle-fields; from these vast, silent valleys of the dead; from all the earth—rejuvenated now—shall one mighty ascription of praise, one ever swelling hosanna-anthem arise to "Him who sitteth on the THRONE, and to the LAMB, forever and ever."

The Son of David will sway his scepter over real,

visible subjects. God's grand universe, in its final adjustment, will present no such incongruity as a personal Prince reigning over an empire of invisible entities. The inhabitants of the new earth will not be an "innumerable company" of spectral beings, drifting about in the air.

The nature of the heavenly citizenship is determined by the literal resurrection of the dead, and the physical personality of the risen Saviour, as demonstrated to his disciples, and to many eye-witnesses. Besides, a sample, a sort of "first fruits" of redeemed humanity, has already appeared. Enoch and Elijah went up *bodily*. It was not an "immortal essence" which mounted a chariot of fire and drove off into the heavens.

The community of the blessed will not be a mixed order of beings, partly literal and physical, and partly fleshless, boneless, cold, ghostly mentalities, with no eyes for beauty and no voices for song; with no brows for a mother's kiss, and no hand-grasp for remembered love. But all will be actual, real, recognizable. And Christ's citizens will be as personal and material as were the tribes of Israel.

The Christ-King will reign FOREVER. God has but one Son, and David but one *royal* heir. "The government shall be upon *his* shoulders," "and of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end." The King of kings will have no successor. The throne of David, once filled by the rightful seed, will nevermore be vacant.

The subjects will *reign* with their King. Christ will reign in sovereign power. But his government

will be founded in righteousness, administered in love, and maintained in peace. It will not be said of him, "He could not bear a brother near his throne." His joy will be in the love and bliss of his people.

"If we suffer, we shall also *reign* with him." 2 Tim. 2: 12. The poorest saint that toils on alone, in tears and want and woes, through this sad vale of life, shall have a royal seat close by the throne, under the smile of the loving King. The friendless orphan, cast out, a homeless waif, on the world's rough sea of sin and sorrow, shall touch the royal scepter without fear, and lean on the bosom of the great Ruler. The timid, self-distrustful disciple, struggling oft with dark tempests of doubts and fears, shall share in full measure the joys and honors of the kingdom, and receive, without abatement, the benedictions from the *throne*.

New form of monarchy this, wherein the subjects share the glory of the Crown! The thrones of earth have dripped with blood, and worldly sovereigns have swayed cruel scepters over crouching subjects outraged of their rights. But here comes at last a mightier than human princes—a King anointed with righteousness, and bearing a scepter of equity; before whose face oppression, wrong, sin and sorrow flee away, and there is found no place for them. Under his rule the oppressed go free"; all are equal, and all are blest.

"From the oppressor's hand  
The scourge of violence falls, and from  
His back, healed of its stripes,  
The burden of the slave."

How much our distracted world needs a ruler!—one wiser, stronger and purer than any mortal being. There is no people on the earth contented with their government, nor any sovereign safe on his throne. The scepters of the world are held with trembling hands, and stealthy insurrection crouches at every palace gate. War flaunts its bloody ensigns over all lands, on all seas. The forces of nature are utilized for purposes of destruction and death. Honesty has fled the world, and justice lies bleeding in the streets. There is no peace, no safety, no rest. Our race and world need regeneration and headship. Earth demands a King. And a voice comes from the *holy places*: “Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.”

“He comes, our ‘Bridegroom-King’—the same  
 Who pledged his bride a princely dower—  
 A stone engraved with his ‘new name’,  
 His seal of love and royal power  
 Reserved until the marriage hour  
 To keep *her* love and hope afame,  
 Till he should come his own to claim,  
 And regal splendors round her shower.  
 “His precious, wondrous, glorious name,  
 More bright than myriad stars shall blaze,  
 When angel voices shall proclaim  
 The end of weary pilgrim days.  
 What glad, new songs the church will raise,  
 When on her brow he writes his name,  
 And all creation swells th’ acclaim:  
 “Worthy the Lamb of endless praise.”

## CHAPTER XI.

### THE CHURCH NOT IN DARKNESS.

Do the Scriptures furnish any special evidences of the approximate time of our Lord’s coming in resurrection and restitution power and glory?

It is perfectly safe to say that no event has ever occurred or ever can occur, in the divine administration of worlds, more seriously and grandly affecting the interests and destinies of whole races of intelligent and responsible beings than the personal return of our Lord Jesus Christ to this earth.

The second coming of Christ will settle, beyond a possibility of reconsideration, many questions of eternal import.

When he comes, all gospel work will be finished, probation will cease, and the last opportunity of reconciliation to God will be forever closed. Arching the *fiery gateway* of the heavens, through which the King of kings will appear with power and glory, will be seen, by every eye, these words: “LET HIM THAT IS HOLY BE HOLY STILL; AND HE THAT IS FILTHY LET HIM BE FILTHY STILL.”

Would it not be most singular, if the Bible, which reveals with such wonderful minuteness the entire

character and order of events that have constituted human history for *six thousand years*, and which declares so variously and so solemnly that the present order of things is certainly to terminate, and that the coming of Christ will inaugurate the grand and awful change, should afford our doomed race no indication, no evidence or sign of the near approach of the final and fatal catastrophe?

When all the great events which relate to the faith and comfort of the church, and to the destiny of the race, are revealed in the Holy Word, and many of them located as to the place and time of their occurrence, would it be natural to expect that the second coming of Christ, which will be the culmination of all that is of vital moment in prophecy and history, will form an exception, and the church be left with no intimation of its near approach?

Will it be said that the *time* of Christ's predicted advent is of no interest to the saints who may live at the period of his appearing? Was it of no importance to Noah *when* the flood would come? Was it a matter of total *indifference* to Lot whether the ill-fated cities should be consumed by fire at once or at any time within fifty or a hundred years? How would Simeon and Anna have felt, as day by day they watched in the temple for one look at the promised Babe of Bethlehem ere their sun of life should set, had they been driven out with the cruel criticism that it was of "no consequence *when*" the promised Messiah should come; whether in their time or not for a thousand years? What if that glorious old father in Israel had been told by some priest or

Levite that his pretended revelation "That he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ," was a delusion; and that he was a fanatic, and "had no right to attempt to pry into the mysteries which God has kept in his own power"? Would not the "heavenly host" have come with more than lightning speed, and, covering his patriarchal form with their shining wings, have sung again the rapturous song that waked the midnight silence of the Judean hills when the kingly babe had birth?

But it may be urged that "no one knows anything at all about the time." Well, it is very certain that no one knows anything more about it than is revealed in the Holy Oracles. We must not follow any man's dreams or visions. But there is "a more sure word of prophecy whereunto ye do well that ye take heed." The ancient church was eagerly looking for the first advent, and knew very nearly the time of its occurrence. Will not the church of the last days have as much light as they?

We inquire—not irreverently—what has been the divine habit as to revealing coming events to the church? Has God kept his people in ignorance of the dispensational changes through which they have been called to pass, and sprung upon them suddenly and unawares the signal events with which their prosperity and destiny were complicated?

Both the *fact* and the *time* of the overwhelming catastrophe which swept the antediluvians into oblivion were revealed to Noah. To Abraham God made known the enslavement of his people for a period of four hundred years, and their subsequent deliver-

ance. The destruction of Sodom was revealed to Abraham and Lot. Daniel was divinely and definitely informed concerning the events which should befall his people, covering a period of more than five hundred years, including the first advent of Christ, the crucifixion and the destruction of Jerusalem. The scenes of the cross, the burial, resurrection and ascension were described and located long before they transpired. The perilous conditions into which the disciples were thrown by the fall of Jerusalem were pointed out to them in advance, and signs were given by which they were to know the hour for their escape. And does it seem likely that the grandest, most solemn and awful event in all our world's tragical history, "the day for which all other days were made," the hour which involves the wreck of a world and the destiny of a race—does it seem natural or consistent that the "great assize" will be launched upon our doomed millions without a single note of special warning?

But is there any Scripture evidence that the church of the last days will know the approximate time of her Lord's return? Let us see.

After Daniel had received, by divine instruction, the grand outline of our World's history, running to the resurrection and the establishment of Christ's everlasting kingdom, he was informed that "The words were closed up and sealed till the *time of the end*"—not till the *end*, but till the "*time of the end*. And, it is added, "But the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand."

Now, this language definitely implies that at the "*time of the end*" the sealed words would be unsealed; and that even when the words should be unsealed the wicked would not understand their import, but that the wise—the saints—*would* understand the meaning of the words—the whole scope of the revelations made to Daniel; especially what relates to last day scenes.

And in the New Testament we find a singularly correspondent scripture: "But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day; we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober." 1 Thess. 5: 1-6.

No one will deny that this scripture relates to our Lord's second coming. And it most clearly teaches that "They that say peace and safety"—the wicked and worldly multitude—will be in darkness concerning the coming of "the day of the Lord;" and it also clearly affirms that the "brethren"—the saints—will *not* be in "darkness" as to the coming of "the day of the Lord." To say that the Lord's return will be unexpected alike to saints and sinners is to render this scripture utterly unmeaning.

The Saviour described a series of omens of his immediate coming, and said to his disciples—as the medium of communication to the church of the last days—“And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.” Luke 21: 28.

Would the Lord call upon the church to rejoice in view of the nearness of his coming if no intimation of the time of his return is to be given? Would he command the bride to be *ready* and then deny her any possible indication of the time set for the marriage! Would he say, “Now learn a parable of the fig tree. When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves ye know that summer is near; so likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, *know that it* (the coming of Christ) is nigh, even at the doors,” if his people are to know nothing about it?

The entire scope of inspired teaching touching this point is to the effect that the true church will be fully apprised—during the “time of the end”—of the imminence of her Lord’s return, and, with uplifted head, she will be found joyfully marking the “tokens of his kingdom near” when the glad trump shall announce his glorious epiphany.

The especial purpose of Old Testament prophecy was, first, to announce and develop the Messianic promise, and prepare the world for the first advent. All the predictions which related to that august event focalized, with approximate definiteness, in the *time* of Christ’s manifestation; so that there was a general expectancy, not only among the Jew-

ish people, but among the heathen nations also, of a great dispensational change; and the appearance of some remarkable personage who should rule the world in righteousness. And it is the very spirit and intent of prophecy to forewarn of coming events that the people may prepare. Josephus, in recording the strange events which occurred at the period of the crucifixion says, “God takes care of mankind, and by all ways possible foreshows to our race what is for their preservation.” And a higher authority than Josephus has said, “Surely the Lord God will do *nothing*, but he revealeth his secret to his servants the prophets.” Amos 3: 7.

And, secondly, prophecy sweeps onward to the end of gospel times,—the end of the world—and culminates in such an array of historic fulfilment, such phenomenal conditions of society, such groupings of “signs and wonders” that the church is wholly without excuse if she fails to perceive the “times and seasons” and remains in darkness as to the point at which she is living, in the rush of the mortal years.

It is the coming and kingdom of Christ which shines through all the pages of the Apocalypse, like the face of God through pillars of fire. The grouping of long lines of consecutive events, leading up to the manifestation of the Prince of peace; vivid descriptions of the wonderful scenes which herald the immediate advent, coupled with solemn admonitions to the churches to “keep the sayings of the prophecy of this book” constitute the burden and the grandeur of The Revelation.

And thus does this last book of the sacred canon, and these last words of God to men begin: "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John: who bare record of the Word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw. Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein; for the time is at hand. John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne; and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him; and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen." Rev. 1: 1-7.

Of this text Dr. Adam Clark gives the following exegesis: "The revelation of Jesus Christ." The Greek word from which we have our word *Apocalypse* signifies, literally, a *revelation*, or discovery of what was concealed, or hidden. It is here said that this *revelation*, or discovery of hidden things was given by God to Jesus Christ; and Christ gave it to

his angel, and that this angel showed it to John and that John sent it to the CHURCHES. Thus we find it came from God to Christ, from Christ to the angel, from the angel to John, and from John to the church."

"*Revelation* is to teach us to understand the times, not the times to interpret to us the *Apocalypse*." [AUBERLEN.]

"In this book all the other books of the Bible end and meet; in it is the consummation of all previous prophecy." [BENGEL.]

Incontrovertibly, God's purpose in giving these *revelations* to Christ, and, through him and John, to the churches, and through them to the church at large, even to the end of the age, was that the people of God should *understand* the successive order of the events described, and the time, or at least the approximate time of their occurrence; for to what purpose could the revelation, or unveiling be if the wonderful events delineated were not to be understood *after* they were revealed any more than before? To say that things revealed or unveiled are not to be seen or known is to assert an absurdity; is, in effect, to say that to unveil is to cover, and to reveal is to obscure, to hide; so that things unveiled cannot be seen, and things revealed cannot be understood. A positive contradiction of terms.

Does the blessed God so trifle with his people? Is the Inspired Word a blind, a false guide? Does the Master "say and straight unsay." Does the Lord propose to make known when he *means* to conceal?

"The Revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave unto him, to *show* unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass." But are "the things which must shortly come to pass" to be *shown* unto his servants that they may *not* be understood? To take that ground would render null and void every word of prophecy every written. When God revealed to Daniel what should befall his people was it to the intent that neither Daniel nor the people should understand what was coming upon them?

"*Blessed* is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy." In what conceivable sense can they be *blest* who read this prophecy, if they cannot understand its import? Is "ignorance bliss" in matters which enfold eternal destinies?

"And *KEEP* those things—or sayings—which are written therein." How can God's servants and people *keep* the things written if they do not and cannot know what the things written mean?

"For the time is *at hand*." Of what force, as a motive to "keep the things that are written" can it be that the "time is at hand," if nobody is to know *when* the time is at hand?

As the *Revelation* is the book of last day scenes, and is especially concerned with the second coming of Christ and concomitant events, we must conclude that its object is to *unveil* to the church the course of events running to the "end of all things" that she may be apprized of her expected King's approach. And to this agree the words of our Lord: "Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth; but I have called you

friends; for *all things* that I have heard of my Father I have *made known* unto you." John 15: 15.

Let us devoutly thank God and our Lord Jesus Christ that his people who live and labor, weep and suffer, amid these last day scenes and perils, are not left in darkness as to the imminence of the consummation. That the real servants of the Most High are not left in doubt as to what is "meat in due season." That the separated and sanctified church is not abandoned of her Lord to "darkness," and left to be overtaken "as a thief." That the "times and seasons" are not hidden from their apprehension. But that by prophecy and signs; by unnumbered voices in the heavens above, and in the earth beneath; voices of the seas and voices of the lands; voices of the nations and voices of the great nominal church; voices of history, of nature, of experience; by the concurrent affirmation of *all* portents, we do know that the coming and kingdom of our long absent Lord is as nigh at hand as is the sweet flowering summer time when the trees put forth their welcome leaves.

"But ye, brethren, are *not* in darkness that that day should overtake *you* as a thief."

## CHAPTER XII.

## A GLANCE AT PROPHECY.

Prophecy is pre-written history; the revelation of events in advance of their occurrence; the divine method of warning to the ungodly, and for the information and comfort of God's people. Inspired prediction sweeps the entire field of our world's strange career, outlining all its controlling events and dispensational changes, from the moment of its estrangement from its Creator to the time of its impending dissolution and final restitution to its primal conditions and relations. The divine hand always warns before it strikes; and the Heavenly Father does not conceal his great purposes from his servants and people. God's government is not one of surprises to his friends.

"Surely the Lord God will do nothing but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets." Amos 3: 7.

The ages with all their changes were and are open to sight of the great God. The divine omniscience grasps all events, great and small, with all their causes, agencies and forces, immediate or remote; and scans every motion of the universe, from the floating of an atom in the careless breezes to the falling of a nation or the dissolution of a world.

God can foretell, with unerring certainty, future events—and God only. Prophecy to be infallible, must be inspired; prophecy fulfilled is proven to have been of God. The Scriptures are largely prophetic; and a chief evidence of their authenticity is in the exact accomplishment of their predictions.

"We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place." 2 Pet. 1: 19.

Whoever will give careful heed to prophecy may know where in the world's career we are, and what events are next to be expected.

Let us trace a single line of sacred prediction as to the present attitude of our race and the immediate future of our world.

Some six hundred years before the Saviour of the world was manifested in the flesh, God's ancient people were captured and borne away into a strange land and subjected to a most humiliating bondage.

Babylon was at the zenith of its glory. Nebuchadnezzar held scepter over the known world. His kingdom was the first of the four *great world-powers* destined to fill up the entire period of human history.

In the second year of his reign Nebuchadnezzar had a wonderful dream. On awaking he was deeply and strangely impressed, but could not recall even the substance of his night vision. So did it prey upon his mind that he called his astrologers, sorcerers and magicians, and demanded of them to tell him his dream, and the interpretation thereof. This they were unable to do, for God only knew

what he had caused the king to dream, and the wise men of Babylon were not in communication with Heaven. And the king was angry, and gave orders that all the wise men be slain.

Some young Hebrew captives of war, of whom Daniel was one, were included in this number. Daniel demurred that the decree was hasty, and desired to see the king; and, being allowed a little time, he and his fellow captives took the matter to the Lord in prayer; and the dream and the interpretation thereof were made known to him in a vision by night. And coming into the royal presence Daniel said: "The secret which the king hath demanded cannot the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, the soothsayers, show unto the king: But there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days. Thy dream, and the vision of thy head upon thy bed, are these: As for thee, O king, thy thoughts came into thy mind upon thy bed, what should come to pass hereafter; and he that revealeth secrets maketh known to thee what shall come to pass. But as for me, this secret is not revealed to me for any wisdom that I have more than any living, but for their sakes that shall make known the interpretation to the king, and that thou mightest know the thoughts of thy heart. Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible. This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass.

His legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them; and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king. Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold. And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth. And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron; forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things; and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise. And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. And as the toes of the feet were part of iron and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry

clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men; but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay. And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter; and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure. Daniel 2: 27-45.

Let it be specially noticed that Daniel disclaimed, before the king, any wisdom in himself, and declared that he had received the knowledge of the dream and its interpretation through direct revelation from God.

The great image which the king of Babylon saw in his dream, in the form of a man, with head of gold, breast and arms of silver, belly and thighs of brass, legs of iron, and feet part of iron and part of clay, was intended to represent four great empires—the Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Grecian and Roman. So Daniel, instructed by the Lord, explained it. And the last of the four was to be followed by a fifth universal kingdom to be "set up by the God of Heaven."

Josephus represents Daniel as saying to Nebuchadnezzar: "Wherefore as thou in thy sleep was

solicitous concerning those that should succeed thee in the government of all the world, God was desirous to show thee all those that should reign after thee."

"Daniel commences the interpretation as follows: 'Thou, O king, art a king of kings; for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold.' (Dan. 2: 37, 38.)

"Here it is plainly stated that the head of gold represents Nebuchadnezzar and his kingdom, over which he ruled. At that time he was the greatest monarch on earth, having the chief control over the known world. Hence the Lord spake through the prophet Jeremiah as follows: "I have made the earth, the man and the beast that are upon the ground, by my great power and by my outstretched arm, and have given it unto whom it seemed meet unto me. And now have I given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant; and the beasts of the field have I given him also to serve him. And all nations shall serve him, and his son, and his son's son, until the very time of his land come: and then many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of him. And it shall come to pass, that the nation and kingdom which will not serve the same Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, and that will not put their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, that nation will I punish, saith the Lord, with the sword, and with the famine, and with the pestilence, until I have consumed them by his hand. Therefore hearken not ye to your prophets, nor to your diviners, nor to your dreamers, nor to your enchanters, nor to your sorcerers, which speak unto you,

saying, Ye shall not serve the king of Babylon; for they prophesy a lie unto you.' (Jer. 27: 5-10.)

"From the foregoing Scripture, we learn that the kingdom of Babylon was to continue to the time of Nebuchadnezzar's grand-son, who was Belshazzar. History shows that he was the last king of Babylon, which proves this part of the prophecy was correct.

"Before noticing the prophecies referring to the ending of the Babylonian kingdom, let us take a hasty survey of the city, which was the largest in extent ever built on the earth. It was square, being fifteen miles on a side, or sixty miles in circumference, surrounded by a wall eighty-seven feet thick, and three hundred and fifty feet high, and wide enough on the top for four-horse chariots to pass each other. Outside of the city was a deep ditch made by using its clay to make the brick for the wall. The river Euphrates ran through the city. It was some eighty rods wide, and eleven feet deep. To please his wife, Queen Smytis, Nebuchadnezzar caused a large artificial mountain to be built in Babylon, four hundred feet high, on which grew tall trees of the forest. It was irrigated by water drawn by machinery from the Euphrates. The river had a wall on its banks like the one around the city. There were twenty-five gates on a side, and streets running from them across the entire city, cutting it into six hundred and twenty-five squares, to which were added fifty-one more, making six hundred and seventy-six in all. Each square had about twenty-eight thousand square rods. The king's palace was six miles in circumference, and surrounded by three walls. When looking over this vast city, Nebuchadnezzar said: 'Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom, by the might of my power, and for the honor of my majesty.'

"Leaving this stand-point, we pass to Evil Mero-dach, the next king of Babylon, who reigned some

six years, and then to Belshazzar, the grandson of Nebuchadnezzar, the last king of Babylon, who reigned seventeen years. According to the prophecy of Jeremiah, the Babylonian kingdom was to end with this king. The facts in the case sustain the prophecy. According to the Sacred Scriptures, Belshazzar 'made a great feast to a thousand of his lords,' the last night of the seventy years of the Jewish Captivity, when he had a merry time in drinking wine from the golden vessels that had been taken from the temple at Jerusalem. While heartily engaged in their joyous festivities, and praising their idol gods, a hand was seen writing on 'the wall of the king's palace.' The sight so frightened Belshazzar, that 'his knees smote one against another,' and he 'cried aloud to bring in the astrologers, . . . and the soothsayers,' to read the writing, and give the interpretation, promising a great reward to the one who should be successful; but not one of them could read the writing. This increased his alarm, and his countenance was so changed, that his lords were astonished. The news came to the queen, who came in haste to the banquet house, and endeavored to quiet the king by saying to him, that there was a man in his kingdom by the name of Daniel, in whom was 'an excellent spirit, and knowledge, and understanding;' who was noted for interpreting dreams, and explaining hard sentences; and she wished he might be called immediately. In compliance with her request, the captive was brought in before the king, who said to him: 'Art thou that Daniel which art of the children of the captivity of Judah?'

"When the king was satisfied that he had found the right man, he said: 'I have heard of thee, . . . that light, and understanding, and excellent wisdom is found in thee. And now the wise men, the astrologers, have been brought in before me, that they should read this writing, and make known unto me the interpretation thereof; but they could not show

the interpretation of the thing; and I have heard of thee, that thou canst make interpretations, and dissolve doubts; now if thou canst read the writing, and make known to me the interpretation thereof, thou shalt be clothed with scarlet, and have a chain of gold about thy neck, and shalt be the third ruler in the kingdom. Then Daniel answered and said before the king, Let thy gifts be to thyself, and give thy rewards to another; yet I will read the writing unto the king, and make known to him the interpretation.' (Dan. 5: 13-17.)

"Having said this to the king, Daniel gave a brief review of the life of Nebuchadnezzar, referring to his great exaltation and power, his pride, and subsequent humiliation, till he was ready to acknowledge 'that the Most High God ruled in the kingdom of men.' Then he turned to the king and said: 'Thou, . . . O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knowest all this; but hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven, and . . . hast praised the gods of silver, and gold, of brass, iron, wood, and stone, which see not, nor hear, nor know, and the God in whose hand thy breath is, . . . hast thou not glorified.' He then informed Belshazzar that the writing was sent from the God of heaven, which he read as follows: 'MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN'; and then said, 'This is the interpretation of the thing; MENE, God hath numbered thy kingdom and finished it. TEKEL, thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting. PERES [used in the Septuagint, meaning the same as *upharsin*], thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians.' (Dan. 5: 23-28.)

"After Daniel had made known the writing and the interpretation, the king ordered that he should be clothed with scarlet, and a chain of gold put about his neck, and that he 'should be the third ruler in the kingdom.' But 'in that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain,' and

the kingdom of Babylon came to a sudden and perpetual end. It had been declared by the prophet Isaiah more than two hundred years before this event, that Cyrus should be the one to take Babylon, and let go the captives taken there by Nebuchadnezzar, seventy years before Belshazzar's overthrow. The prophecy reads as follows: 'I am the Lord that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself; . . . that saith of Cyrus, he is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure; even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid. Thus saith the Lord to . . . Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two-leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut. I will go before thee, . . . that thou mayest know that I the Lord, which call thee by name, am the God of Israel. . . . I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me.' (Isa. 44: 24, 38. 45: 1-4.) Again the Lord speaks of Cyrus through Isaiah, and says: "He shall build my city, and he shall let go my captives, not for price nor reward, saith the Lord of hosts." (Isa. 45: 13.)

"More than one hundred years before Babylon was taken by Cyrus, the prophet Jeremiah was instructed by the Lord to say of it: 'I have laid a snare for thee, and thou art also taken, O Babylon, as thou wast not aware.' (Jer. 50: 24.) He goes on to say, 'A drought is upon her waters: and they shall be dried up' (50: 38); and then says: 'Every purpose of the Lord shall be performed against Babylon, to make the land of Babylon a desolation without an inhabitant.' (Jer. 51: 29.)

"The prophecies of Isaiah and Jeremiah, to which reference has just been made, show that Cyrus was called by name about two hundred years before his birth, as the one who was to conquer

Babylon; also the plan by which it was to be taken. The waters of the river Euphrates were to 'be dried up,' and 'the two leaved gates' were to be left open for the entrance of the army of Cyrus. History informs us that on the memorable night of Belshazzar's feast, when Daniel read the hand-writing on the palace walls, that Cyrus, at the same time, had gathered his army about Babylon, and in the course of the night opened some canals above the city, leading from the river Euphrates, by means of which he caused the water to flow around, instead of through the city. As soon as the water in the city had passed away, Cyrus marched his army into Babylon in the bed of the river. When he came to the two-leaved brazen gates, which closed the streets leading to the river, he found them open. Those whose business it was to shut them had become so absorbed in the great feast, they forgot to close them as usual; thus fulfilling the prophecy. Cyrus went immediately to the palace, where he found the merriment of the feast at high tide. Belshazzar knew nothing of what Cyrus was doing that night, till he saw him with his soldiers entering his palace. He drew his sword in self-defense, but was slain on the spot. Thus the feast ended, and with it the Babylonian kingdom. Then was fulfilled what Daniel read on the wall, and declared to Belshazzar a few hours before: 'Thy kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians.' 'Darius, the Median,' called also Cyaxares, was the uncle of Cyrus, and they held an associate reign for two years over the Medo-Persian empire, till the death of Darius. Although Cyrus was the chief manager in taking Babylon, 'he let his uncle enjoy the first rank' while he lived.

"We have now come to the end of the Babylonian kingdom, as represented by the head of gold, connected with the great metallic image, seen by Nebuchadnezzar, and explained by Daniel about seventy

years before. This empire continued some two hundred and ten years.

"When Daniel had explained the head of gold as already shown, he said to the king: 'After thee shall arise another kingdom, inferior to thee.' This second kingdom was represented by the breast and arms of silver. It is the one that conquered and succeeded the Babylonian; and as all admit that it was the Medo-Persian, under Cyrus and Darius, it is not necessary to pause longer on the second kingdom, which continued over two hundred years, till the time of Darius Codomanus, the last Medo-Persian king, who was conquered by the Grecians.

"After telling the king that the head of gold denoted the Babylonian kingdom, the breast and arms the Medo-Persian, or second kingdom, he then stated that the 'belly and . . . thighs of brass' signified a 'third kingdom,' which should 'bear rule over all the earth.' (Dan. 2: 39.)

"As all who have read ancient history will admit that the Grecian kingdom, under Alexander the Great, succeeded the Medo-Persian, about b. c. 331, we look for the next point in Daniel's interpretation of the dream of Nebuchadnezzar. After referring to the three kingdoms already noticed, he says: 'The fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron.' (Dan. 2: 40.) This kingdom is represented by the legs and feet of the 'great image.' Daniel is instructed by 'the God of heaven' to say that this 'fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron,' but afterward it 'shall be divided,' and then it will be only 'partly strong,' and at last become like 'miry clay,' being very weak politically.

"The next great and noted kingdom that followed the Grecian was the Roman, under the Cæsars. In b. c. 168, it began to swallow up Alexander's vast empire, and by b. c. 31, Augustus Cæsar, the first Roman emperor, had it all under his control. For four hundred years the Roman empire was the con-

trolling political power on this planet. In the time of Cæsar Augustus, he issued a decree 'that all the world should be taxed.' At that time Christ was born. Near the close of the fourth century, the Roman empire began to be broken up into fragments, which served to weaken its power very materially. This corresponds with what 'the God of heaven' told Daniel more than eight hundred years before it came to pass.

"As intimated in the prophecy, the Roman empire continued many years in its divided state, when at last the feet and toes of the image are reached. Then the strength of the Roman power will be only like 'clay,' very weak. Such it is to-day. Then we must be near the time for it to come to its perpetual end. Bro. Moody could not be far from the truth when he remarked that he believed we have reached the period in this world's history represented by the toes of Nebuchadnezzar's image. If that be so, and all prophecy seems to say, Amen; then we must be near the time for the stone to smite the image upon the feet, and 'break them to pieces,' when the parts of the image will become 'like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors; and the wind' will carry 'them away, that no place' be 'found for them,' and that which the stone represents will fill 'the whole earth,' and 'stand forever.'

"At the time Daniel had the dream explained to him over twenty-three hundred years ago, he was shown that when in the progress of events, we arrive at the period represented by the toes of the image, after the fragments of the fourth kingdom, or Roman empire, have filled their part of the great prophetic programme, that then 'shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.'" (Dan. 2: 44.) It will be seen at a glance that 'the stone

which 'smote the image' represents the kingdom of God, which is to take the place of all these other kingdoms; and that those who inherit that kingdom will possess it 'forever.' No invader will ever come in to take it from them. This is the kingdom referred to in the Lord's prayer; and also in Matt. 25: 31-34, where Jesus says: 'When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory; and before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats; and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.'—PROPHETIC SYMBOLS, No. 1, by M. Grant.

For more than two decades of centuries the young Hebrew captive of war has slept with his fathers. But his *words* have been "marching on." The mighty kingdoms have come and gone exactly as he said. Had he lived in our time and written up the history of the empires from the moment when he interpreted the king's dream in Babylon until now, he could not have stated it more accurately. And can we doubt that what little remains to complete the measure of the *iron kingdom*, which is now in its last extremities, in the very toes of the image—can any one doubt that the closing scenes of the fourth and last of the great world-powers will transpire with the same divinely directed certainty that has marked the progress and close of the three preceding kingdoms?

At what a solemn juncture of events do we find

ourselves! How imminent is the august hour when the "STONE cut out of the mountain without hands" shall smite the image on the *feet*, and "break in pieces and consume" all that remains of earthly governments, and shall *itself* fill the whole earth.

Let all the friends of God rejoice that the long and cruel reign of the fourth monarchy is *very soon* to reach its sanguinary conclusion, under the fierce wrath of Almighty God; and to be succeeded by the peaceful, universal and everlasting kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.

It is time our world had rest. Long and bloody have been the ages. The people of the Most High have wept and prayed and died. The earth is rent with rival powers; each seeking to consume the others. The very soil is choked by the blood and dust of the slain. The whole creation sighs to be delivered. The martyrs—an army vast—wait to be avenged. The holy Word of God, rejected long, and trampled into dust, craves vindication. The heir of David's vacant throne, expectant long, desires his crown and kingdom.

The time is now at hand, the day foretold by prophets, and sung by holy bards: the hour of jubilee to all the *just*; the morning of creation's second birth is soon to dawn.

All hail, auspicious morn! Welcome, sweet day of rest! Thrice welcome, Prince of peace!

[For a more elaborate treatment of the great subject of prophecy we refer the reader to a new and very able work entitled "The World's Great Empires," by Mrs. L. C. McKinstry.]

### CHAPTER XIII.

#### MORAL SIGNS OF THE ADVENT NEAR.

It is our purpose, under this head, to exhibit, in a condensed form, the *moral evidences* that the Lord's coming is *now at hand*.

The uniform statement of the Bible is that the world will be *fearfully wicked* at the time of Christ's coming. "And he said, Go thy way, Daniel, for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end. Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the *wicked shall do wickedly*; and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand." (Daniel 12: 9, 10.) This text occurs at the close of the prophecy of Daniel, which runs down to the end of time, and describes most clearly the condition of society just previous to our Lord's appearing.

"But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived." (2 Timothy 3: 13.) This text precludes the idea, so popular, that the world is growing better, or that it ever will be any better. It positively asserts that wicked men will become more and more wicked as we near the end. And this is the teaching of the whole Bible on this subject.

"Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea ! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time." (Rev. 12: 12.)

The devil's reign being limited to the period of probation, as he sees the final hour approaching he will exert all his wonderful skill to the utmost. This will be seen in the unparalleled wickedness of men. Carnal human nature will be set on fire by satan for the perpetration of the most revolting abominations and wickedness.

"By swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery, they break out, and blood toucheth blood. Therefore shall the land mourn, and every one that dwelleth therein shall languish, with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven ; yea, the fishes of the sea also shall be taken away." (Hosea 4: 2, 3.)

This is a prophetic view of the *culmination* of human wickedness just prior to the opening of God's terrible judgment day. One would think that Hosea must have uttered these words from the centre of some of our great modern cities.

"But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came and took them all away ; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." (Matt. 24: 37-39.)

These are the Saviour's own words, who saw the

end from the beginning. The statement of this text is, that as great and terrible wickedness prevailed just before the old world was destroyed by water, so will great wickedness prevail just before the present world will be destroyed by fire.

"For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the Word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water. Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished. But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men." (2 Pet. 3: 5-7.)

Now, does the present moral condition of our world correspond to these startling descriptions of God's Word? To this question there can be but one intelligent answer.

No one of ordinary observation can fail to see that the human race, as a whole, is criminal beyond all precedent. The daily press is *reddened* and *blackened* with heart-sickening and horrid details of the most bloody, unnatural and monstrous types of crime, such as no age has developed. Wickedness of the deepest dye has become so common that it ceases to produce surprise. Half a dozen murders in a single day, in our own country, excite no unusual comment.

The worst depravities of human nature seem to have broken away from all restraints. Brutal life-taking, coupled with the most *hideous mutilations* of the helpless victims, worthy only of *incarnate fiends*, are of frequent occurrence. Parents starving

their own children to death; and children maltreating, and often killing their parents. Little boys slaying their playfellows, in the yards of their own dwellings, with all the deliberation of practised criminals. Ladies violently seized in the open streets of our New England cities and dragged away to dens of infamy.

These statements are not overdrawn. The intelligent reader will at once recall actual cases of recent occurrence answering to each of these descriptions. So the Word of God has declared it would be in "the last days."

Mr. Moody said, in a recent sermon at the Tabernacle: "You say the world is growing better. What a thrill of horror the Parkman murder sent through society! Now a hundred Parkmans might be murdered in a week and it would produce no excitement."

Henry Ward Beecher speaks in the following scathing terms: "All the frame-work of society seems to be dissolving. On every side we find men false to the most important trusts. Even the judges on the bench are bought and sold like meat in the shambles. One must go into court with a long purse to obtain justice. The judiciary of New York stinks like Sodom and Gomorrah. Men say they hardly know a court in which to trust a case. It is no longer an honor to sit on the bench; for if the judge be an upright man, his character will be contaminated by the great majority of his associates."

The Philadelphia *Times* says: "Honesty has fled from the world, and sincerity has fallen asleep.

Piety has hidden herself, and justice cannot find the way. The helper is not at home, and charity lies sick. Benevolence is under arrest, and faith is nearly extinguished. The virtues go a begging, and truth has long since been buried. Credit is turned lazy, and conscience is pinned to the wall."

Says the Hornellsburg *Times*: "The records of the past have never presented a more fearful and corrupt state of society than now exists throughout most parts of the United States. The newspapers from every quarter are becoming more and more loaded with the records of crime."

The *North American* says: "From the terrible evidences of human depravity which develop themselves from day to day, we begin to think that our cities are rapidly descending to the level of Sodom and Gomorrah."

The *New York Herald* says: "Crimes of all descriptions are on the increase, especially those of the blackest dye, the increase being much greater than the proportionate increase of population."

Says the *Expositor*, a political paper: "Crimes, unprecedented in number and unequalled in atrocity, fill every section of our country with horrors, exhibiting a hardened barbarity, in their details, only to be exceeded in the bosom of demons," etc.

Says the *Scientific American*: "It is admitted by all parties that crimes of the most outrageous and unprecedented character abound throughout the country, and probably throughout the world, to a degree wholly unparalleled."

Says the *New York Tribune*: "The telegraph

wires bend under their weight of woe ; the old earth quivers with throbs of agony from the centre to the pole ; cities are shaken down, countries are engulfed ; fair domains are overflowed with red-hot lava ; wife is arrayed against husband, mother against child, son against father."

Robert Pollok, who walked and talked with God, and studied the Bible with prayerful care, fifty years ago foresaw the times in which we live, and thus described them :

"Meanwhile the earth increased in wickedness,  
And hasted daily to fill up her cup.  
Satan raged loose ; Sin had her will ; and Death  
Enough ; blood trod upon the heels of blood :  
Revenge, in desperate mood, at midnight met  
Revenge ; war brayed to war : deceit deceived  
Deceit ; lie cheated lie ; and treachery  
Mined under treachery ; and perjury  
Swore back on perjury ; and blasphemy  
Arose with hideous blasphemy ; and curse  
Loud answered curse ; and drunkard stumbling fell  
O'er drunkard fallen ; and husband husband met  
Returning each from other's bed defiled ;  
Thief stole from thief ; and robber on the way  
Knocked robber down ; and lewdness, violence  
And hate, met lewdness, violence and hate.  
Oh, Earth ! thy hour was come."

The church is now numbered by millions. It would be singular if these millions were all devoted, zealous Christians, and yet the world at large so wicked as it is seen to be. If Christendom were true to God and God's gospel of grace, the multitudes of sinners would be powerfully restrained and

rapidly converted. The terrible prevalence of sin and crime naturally suggests default in the religious world.

Now the Bible is an exact statement of this world's history in advance. The Holy Book deals in entire faithfulness with all classes. The Bible, like the God of the Bible, is no respecter of persons. We may, therefore, expect in God's Word a definite description of the religious world at the time of the end, as one of the evidences that Christ's coming is near.

We will let God himself speak ; and may the Holy Spirit deeply impress on the reader's heart the force of the divine utterances which follow. "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy. Without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good ; traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God ; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof ; from such turn away." (2 Tim. 3 : 1-5.)

This is a startling description of the nominal Christian church. It must apply to the church, for sinners have no "*Form of godliness*." The force of the text is that the bad elements spoken of would come to be largely *intermixed* with genuine religion in the *last days*, making the times *religiously "perilous"*. That the church would go down to the world to such an extent that the characters above described

would find easy access to her membership and communion; and so the whole body become weakened and corrupted.

We find also in Jude some very strong statements on this point: "Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called: mercy unto you, and peace, and love be multiplied. Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core. These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots." (Jude 2, 3, 4, 11, 12.)

Martin Luther said: "You will see that before long such wickedness will prevail, life will become so terrible to bear, that in every quarter the cry will be raised, "Oh, God, come with thy last judgment."

Cotton Mather, D. D., born in 1663, said: "The Ruler of the world, returning to us, will send fore-runners, who shall show his approach and the speed-

iness of his coming. For when our Lord shall come, he will find the world almost void of true and lively faith (especially of faith in his coming); and when he shall descend with his heavenly banners and angels, what else will he find, almost, but the *whole church*, as it were, a *dead carcass*, miserably *putrefied* with the spirit and manners and endearments of the world?"

Now, what is the condition of the nominal Christian church to-day! The Good Book says: "In the multitude of counsellors there is safety." (Prov. 11: 14.) The question, Is Christendom, at this hour, in the condition which the Bible describes it as being in at the time when Christ shall be revealed from heaven? is of vital and solemn importance; for it is one of the moral signs that the day of the Lord is at hand. We will let several witnesses testify on this point—witnesses whose words will have weight with all intelligent readers.

It is a lamentable fact, from which we cannot turn our eyes, that the churches of this country are now suffering severely on account of the great dearth—almost universally complained of. We have never witnessed such a general declension of religion as at the present. Truly, the church should awake and search into the cause of this affliction, for an affliction every one that loves Zion must view it. When we call to mind how few and far between cases of true conversion are, and the almost unparalleled impenitence and hardness of sinners, we almost involuntarily exclaim, Has God forgotten to be gracious? or is the door of mercy closed?

"Look again, and behold the spirit of the world—how it prevails in the church. Where is the pious man who has not been made to sigh on account of these abominations in the midst of us? Who is that man in the political crowd, whose voice is heard above the rest, and is foremost in carrying torchlights, bellowing at the top of his voice? O, he is a Christian! perhaps a class-leader or exhorter. Who is that lady dressed in the most ridiculous fashion, as if nature had deformed her? O, she is a follower and imitator of the humble Jesus! O shame! where is thy blush? This is no uncommon picture, I assure you. Would to God it was. My heart is pained within me while I write."—*Circleville (Ohio) Religious Telescope.*

Dr. Edward Beecher says: "Oh, woful day! Oh, unhappy church of Christ! Fast rushing round and round the fatal circle of absorbing ruin! Thou sayest, I am rich, and increased in goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art poor, and miserable, and blind, and naked! Thus are the ministry of the evangelical Protestant denominations not only formed all the way up under a tremendous pressure of merely human fear, but they live, move and breathe, in a state of things radically corrupt, and appealing every hour to every base element of their nature to hush up the truth, and bow the knee to the power of apostacy.

"Dimly does every one now and then see that things are going wrong. With sighs does every true heart confess that rottenness is somewhere, but ah! it is hopeless of reform. We all pass on, and the

tide rolls down to night. The time has come when men, having itching ears and forms of godliness without the power, are heaping to themselves teachers; when they will not endure sound doctrine, but are turned aside unto fables. And the whole has come about stealthily, nobody knows how, among good men, out of good motives. Was not this the way things went with Rome? Are we not living her life over again?"

The *Oberlin Evangelist*, of February 4th, 1846, contained an article by Professor Finney. The Editor says in the following extracts:—"There are few topics, if any, more unwelcome to us than this. Every flash of light that breaks upon our minds revealing more and more the depths of this degeneracy, it is painfully agonizing. All tells of the guilt and shame of Zion we love. All reveals the dishonor reflected upon the Saviour whom we serve and adore. We have had the facts before our minds, that in general, the Protestant churches of our country as such, were either apathetic or hostile to nearly all the great moral reforms of the age. There are practical exceptions—yet not enough to render the fact otherwise than general.

"It comes to our ears and our eyes also through the religious prints, that very extensively, church members are becoming devotees of fashion. Join hands with the ungodly in parties of pleasure, in dancing, festivities, and as no unnatural consequence, their sons and daughters forsake the houses of evangelical worship, and resort to hear a strain of preaching more consonant with their own tastes,

their own manner of life, and we may add, the manner of life pursued by their fathers and mothers. It is no wonder that a strain of preaching that makes no demand for a change of heart and life, should attract the young, while their orthodox parents live a life which kills the vitality of evangelical truth.

"We need not expand this painful subject. Suffice it that evidence thickens, and rolls heavily upon us, to show that the churches generally are becoming sadly degenerate. They have gone very far from the Lord, and he has withdrawn himself from them.

"It is then fatal, both to the interests of elevated society, and to the salvation of souls, to suppose that a low standard of piety, as the thing is commonly understood, can be any form of Scriptural piety at all. The admission of this error has already slain its myriad of souls, and has done infinite mischief in depressing the piety of the church."

The editor of the *Golden Rule* remarks as follows upon the same subject: "The Protestants are outdoing the popes in splendid extravagant folly in church building. Thousands on thousands are expended in gay and costly ornamentals to gratify pride, and wicked ambition, that might and should go to redeem the perishing millions. Does the evil, the folly, the madness, of these proud, formal, fashionable worshipers stop here? These splendid monuments of popish pride, upon which millions are squandered in our cities, virtually exclude the poor for whom Christ died, and for whom he came spec-

ially to preach. No wonder God withholds his holy influences! No marvel the heavens are brass, and the earth iron!

"One of the religious papers tells a story in relation to church gambling, which contains a lesson worthy of repeating. A member of a church went to his pastor and entreated his personal intercession with his favorite son, who had become ruinously addicted to the vice of gambling. The pastor consented, and, seeking the young man, found him in his chamber. He commenced his lecture, but before he had concluded, the young man laid his hand upon his arm and drew his attention to a pile of splendid volumes that stood upon the dressing-table. 'Well,' said the young man, 'these volumes were won by me at a Fair given in your church; they were my first venture; but for that lottery, under the patronage of a Christian church, I should never have become a gambler.'

While it is gratefully admitted that there are many godly persons in the churches, these extracts are sufficient to show how learned and pious men, ministers and others, regard the present *religious condition* of the world.

The reader's own observations will, doubtless, corroborate what these men say. Church fairs, suppers, festivals, including games of various kinds, are held with increasing frequency, and in the very sanctuary of God where the *death and suffering* of our Lord Jesus Christ is commemorated; and the hilarity and glee is often kept up till a late hour of the night; while religious meetings are poorly

attended, dull and tiresome. How strikingly this state of things corresponds with the statements of God's Word concerning "*the last days.*"

But it may be said that very powerful and glorious revivals are now in progress in various parts of the world. This is true; and a truth it is which gives joy to every christian heart. But this very revival work is an emphatic sign—an evidence of especial significance—that Christ is soon to come. Hear the Word of the Lord: "Then said he unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many; and sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready. And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it; I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have bought a yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them; I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come. So that servant came, and showed his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind. And the servant said unto him, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room. And the Lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. For I say unto you, that none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper.' (Luke 14: 14-16.)

This is Christ's description of the last kind of revival work to be done in this world. It comes as late in the gospel dispensation as the supper time comes in the natural day. It is not to be accomplished by the usual methods of pulpit and church effort, but by a new class of laborers. The multitudes gathered in were not to come from the higher classes, the ranks of respectability, culture and wealth; but from the "*the streets and lanes of the city, the highways and hedges.*" They were not to be attracted by stylish church edifices, pulpit oratory and enchanting music; but "**COMPELLED**" to come in.

Who can fail to be most deeply impressed by the exact fulfillment of Christ's description of the supper call, in the revival work now being done by an army of *lay-evangelists* in all parts of our own land.

We will now offer one more evidence that the great and terrible day of the Lord is at hand. The Bible clearly teaches that at Christ's appearing there will be a people earnestly expecting his immediate coming. One or two texts are sufficient to show this.

"But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief." (1 Thess. 5: 2-4.)

"Seeing then that all these things shall be dis-

solved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness. Looking for and hastening unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent, that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot and blameless." (2 Peter 3 : 11-14.)

These texts teach that, though the Lord will come unexpectedly to the world at large, there will be a people waiting and watching for his return. Is the reader aware that at this moment there are scores of thousands of persons, scattered through every civilization of the globe, including many of the best Bible students in the world, both laymen and ministers, who are now looking with solemn interest for the immediate coming of Christ? Their expectations are based upon the fulfillment of prophecy and the signs of the times.

We regard this as a most significant evidence that the Lord is near. The Holy Spirit would not awaken in the heart of the *bride* such ardent expectations of the Bridegroom's coming if it were not true.

Thus we have brought to view a very few, out of the many, moral signs showing that the *day of the Lord*, the judgment day, with all its grand and awful scenes, is now at hand, and may be expected at any hour.

It is only left for us to most earnestly entreat the

thoughtful reader to look at these things seriously. Read the Word of God for yourself, and look out on the present condition of the church and the world, and be instructed by the many premonitions of *coming doom* which everywhere meet your eye.

"Thus came the day;  
The day that many thought should never come,  
That all the wicked *wished* should never come;  
That all the righteous had *expected* long;  
Day greatly feared, and yet too little feared  
By him who feared it most; day laughed at much  
By the profane; the *trembling* day of all  
Who laughed."

What disappointment, terror and anguish will fall on the unsaved when the angel, standing with one foot on the sea and one foot on the land, shall swear by Him that liveth for ever that time shall be no longer! At those awful words Mercy's long waiting and pleading will cease. The blessed Holy Spirit, that through the ages called, invited, wooed, will retire. The sweet voice of prayer will be forever hushed; from the altars of devotion no tender entreaty will go forth to the wayward throngs. All the holy symbols of pardon, grace, forgiveness, will be withdrawn; the pitying Saviour's intercession-plea will be finished. The last word ever to be uttered in behalf of unheeding sinners will have died away in the Heaven of heavens. The Advocate will have become the Judge. Justice, that waited long, will wait no more. The day of doom has come at last. Hope is dead; despair alone remains. Self-

inflicted woe; sorrow courted by repentance *too long* delayed.

The righteous will be gone,—caught up into chambers in the skies. The wistful eyes of anguish-stricken ones will search in vain for the saintly face of father, mother, pastor, teacher. O how welcome now would be the melting strains of gospel grace and the loving accents of prayer and song! How eagerly would the mercy-seat be thronged! But no mercy-seat is found.

“Mercy that pleaded long,  
Will plead no more.”

All is lost. Sadness, darkness, night, and eternal death will settle as a black pall on all the loved, but lost.

“Hear the sinner thus lamenting  
At the thoughts of future pain;  
Cries and tears he now is venting,  
But he cries and weeps in vain;  
Greatly mourning  
That he ne'er was born again.

“Yonder stand my godly neighbors,  
Who were once despised by me;  
They are clad in dazzling splendor,  
Waiting my sad fate to see—  
Farewell, neighbors;  
Dismal gulf! I'm bound for thee!”

“Now, despisers, look and wonder;  
Hope and sinners here must part;  
Louder than a peal of thunder,  
Hear the dreadful sound, ‘Depart’!  
Lost forever!  
How it quails the sinner's heart!

## CHAPTER XIV.

### PHYSICAL PREMONITIONS.

Nature speaks for God. The heavens and earth and seas lift up their voice responsive to the written Word. The elements bear witness. The sun and moon and stars declare the approaching doom.

“Meanwhile the earth gave symptoms of her end:  
And all the scenery above proclaimed  
That the great last catastrophe was near.”

The *divine* love and faithfulness are in nothing more strikingly exhibited than in the ample and timely warnings which always precede great calamities and judgments. The merciful God has no pleasure in the sufferings of his creatures; but he resorts to all proper means, and employs every consistent agency to avert impending evils by startling the world with a great variety of premonitions.

If every important event in history has been foreseen in prophecy and signalled by abundant omens, what may we expect in regard to the awful, final catastrophe?

It is clearly the purpose of God to faithfully advise all classes of men of the imminence of the judgment scenes. And so, as the solemn hour of

destiny draws near, the heavens and earth teem with *signs* and *wonders*. On every plane of human life; in every department of society; in the thronging marts of commerce; in the fierce arena of governments; in the broad fields of science; across the whole domain of nature; in the councils of state; within the sacred enclosures of religion; in the halls of learning, and at the hearthstone—*everywhere*; day and night, without ceasing, blazon the portents of coming dissolution—the end of all things earthly. To the mind, the consciousness, the eye, the ear; to every faculty and sense the proofs of final scenes address themselves.

"The prophecy for confirmation stood;  
And all was ready for the sword of God.  
The righteous saw, and fled without delay  
Into the chambers of Omnipotence;  
The wicked mock'd and sought for erring cause  
To satisfy the dismal state of things;  
The public credit gone; the fear in time  
Of peace; the starving want in time of wealth,  
The insurrection muttering in the streets;  
And pallid consternation spreading wide;  
And leagues, though holy termed, first ratified  
In hell, on purpose made to under prop  
Iniquity, and crush the sacred truth."

Jehovah will be heard. Men will not be left without a sign, whether they will heed and live, or scoff and perish.

"Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an

*alarm* in my holy mountain; let all the inhabitants of the land tremble; for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand; and I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come." Joel 2: 1, and 2: 30-31.

And St. Peter, in his defence of the Pentecostal phenomena, quotes Joel's words and applies them to the *last days*: "And I will show *wonders* in heaven above, and *signs* in the *earth* beneath." Acts 2: 19.

And when the disciples privately enquired of the Master: "*When* shall these things be? and what shall be the *sign* of thy *coming*, and the *end* of the *world*." (Matt. 24: 3,) he did not rebuke their curiosity, but proceeded to give them, in outline, the signs that would mark the age from that time to the "*end of the world*;" concluding with a series of *special precursors* of the *immediateness* of his "*coming*," in the following majestic words: "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four

winds, from one end of heaven to the other." Matt. 24: 29, 31.

To know when these predictions are fulfilled, is of momentous interest to the church, and to all men; for they herald the Saviour's immediate coming.

There have been many solar obscurations since Christ uttered these words. But the scenes described in this scripture are *chronologically* stated. Their occurrence is associated with other notable historic facts, in a way to leave no doubt of their significance.

It must be noted that the "*tribulation*" predicted by the Saviour was not to be upon the world, nor upon the enemies of God, but upon the church—the disciples of Christ—and cannot, therefore, be applied to the destruction of Jerusalem. But in the long, bloody, relentless persecutions of Rome, covering a period of *twelve hundred and sixty years*, during which time more than *fifty million* martyrs suffered death, by every hideous form of torture which fiendish hate could invent,—in that horrid reign of terror by the cruel "*man of sin*" the words: "*Tribulation of those days*" found their terrible fulfillment.

The tribulation was to continue 1260 years. Now St. Mark says: "But *in those days, after* the tribulation, the sun shall be darkened."

The tribulation had practically ceased upon the Church previous to 1780. Papacy had received a staggering blow from the Queen of Austria.

"In Austria, Maria Theresa made very important improvements for the benefit of her wide dominions.

In 1776 she abolished the torture in the States; and from 1774 to 1778, her attention was occupied with the establishment of a general system of popular education. Various salutary regulations were enforced, touching the *temporalities of the clergy*; and in Italy the arbitrary power of the *Inquisition* was circumscribed within narrow limits."

Now a simple darkening of the sun could not be taken as a definite sign, for there have been several darkenings. But a specially *predicted* darkening of the sun and moon, in definitely stated connection with other celestial phenomena, and immediately following a great historic event, must be accepted as of divine significance.

The Saviour said, "*Immediately after the tribulation* of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven."

In 1779 the greatest "*tribulation*" that has ever befallen the church had spent its fury and ceased its bloody work. And the very next year (1780) on the 19th of May, there was a most remarkable darkening of the sun at noonday, preceded by a perfectly clear sky, and followed by no storm, nor any atmospheric condition that could possibly explain the amazing phenomenon. And this was followed, on the night of the same day, by a *lunar* obscuration equally inexplicable. The night was clear, and the moon was at its full. There was, therefore, no eclipse in either case.

The effect upon all classes of people was scarcely less remarkable than the events themselves. A feeling of solemnity and awe seized all minds; and it

was the general belief that the unaccountable event was a fulfillment of the Saviour's prediction. Matt. 24: 29.

A hundred years have passed since the sun and moon so strangely withheld their shining; and to this hour science has been unable to offer any accepted solution of the mystery. The astronomers are baffled, and stand silent and perplexed before that unparalleled freak of the great luminaries. Herschel, the great astronomer, has said, "That phenomenon of the dark day, May 19th, 1780, has baffled all astronomical solution, and must remain an unsolved mystery to the end of time!" And those events have, therefore, a thousand times greater significance now than at the time of their occurrence. And that the reader may know more fully how godly and scientific observers were impressed, we quote a few of the many accounts given at the time.

"The Hon. Wheeler Martin has favored the Providence *Subaltern* with the following recollections of the Dark Day in 1780:

'The Dark Day was on the 19th of May, 1780. Where I resided at that time, the darkness at 11 o'clock was so great, that a candle was lighted, and placed upon the table; the fowls went to roost; the sheep all huddled around in a circle, with their heads inward; the grass, to look at it through the window, seemed of a yellow green, the same as to look through smoked glass upon green grass. I well remember that the gentleman of the house read the following scripture by candle-light to his numerous family: "The sun shall be turned into darkness.

and the moon into blood before that great and notable day of the Lord's coming.'

'The darkness was so great in the night time, that it was said by one, Dr. Blackington, who resided in the north part of Rehoboth, who had occasion to be out among his sick patients that night, that he could not see his white pocket handkerchief, placed before his eyes. The darkness was so thick that it could be felt. The year 1780 was celebrated for its many Northern Lights. They covered the whole horizon over. They would flash like lightning, and fill the air with the smell of sulphur. The lights were so red, that the flashes would bring warmth to the face."

"John Kennedy, a farmer, in a sermon published in Danvers, Mass., in 1780, thus referred to it:

'The late wonderful and unusual darkness on the 19th of May last, struck the inhabitants of this State with horror and amazement, and at the same time filled them with alarming apprehensions. Yea, the very brutes seemed greatly agitated. If so, could a thinking being sit unmoved, while he beheld the sun, (that splendid luminary whose bright beams of light afford the utmost joy to the beholder,) veiled in darkness at noon-day; to view nature dressed in mourning attire; the earth enveloped in darkness; the husbandmen returning from their fields in great surprise; the midnight sentinels crowing in answer to each other; the dismal din of peeping frogs; the night birds singing forth their dreary notes; the beasts gazing in wild consternation; every countenance seemed to gather blackness: yea, a dismal gloom which filled the beholder with fear and astonishment, waiting with much anxiety for some event. In fine, the darkness was such as we nor our fathers ever saw.'

"If it be granted, (as doubtless it may,) that the late darkness of the sun and moon was from the

force of natural causes, moving and operating in an unusual manner, or could we investigate ever so many true causes for the solution of this strange phenomenon; yet it is the Lord's doings, and it is marvelous in our eyes."

"Says a correspondent from Newport, May 20th, 1780, when speaking of the dark day:

'About ten o'clock, A. M., a darkness came on, which by eleven was perceived to be very unusual and extraordinary, and in half an hour after was considered as what was never before seen in the northern climates of America. The darkness became and continued so intense, from a little before noon to near two o'clock, as that persons could not read, and it became necessary to light up candles. . . . It is not recollectcd from history, that a darkness of equal intenseness and duration has ever happened in any parts of the world, except the miraculous eclipse at the crucifixion of our blessed Saviour. . . . It is to be desired that curious and philosophical gentlemen would favor the public with a solution of this phenomenon.'

"The *Connecticut Journal*, New Haven, May 25th, 1780, says:

'The greatest darkness was, at least, equal to what is commonly called "candle lighting," in the evening. The appearance was indeed uncommon, and the cause unknown.'

"From the *Massachusetts Spy*, May 25th, 1780:  
 'For several hours in the middle of the day, the obscurity was so great, that those who had good eye sight could scarcely see to read common print; the birds and fowls, in many places, retired to their roosts, as though it had been actually night; and people were obliged to light candles to dine by. It was the judgment of many, that about twelve

o'clock (the time of the greatest obscurity,) the daylight was no greater, if so great, as bright moonlight, which by calculation has been found to be 90,000 times less than that of a clear sunshiny day.'

"In 1844, W. Barber, of Hadley, in a letter said: 'I have before me a manuscript sermon, by the Rev. Elam Potter, M. A. upon the Dark Day of May 19th, 1780, delivered upon the 28th of the same month, before the First Society in Enfield, Ct. Text, Matt. 24: 29, 30. After mentioning some of the signs that preceded the destruction of Jerusalem, and stating that he considered that as a type of the end of the world, he mentions some of those that refer to the end of the world, and speaks of the darkening of the sun, as follows:

'But especially, I mention that wonderful darkness on the 19th of May inst. Then, as in our text, the sun was darkened; such a darkness as probably was never known before since the crucifixion of our Lord. People left their work in the house and in the field. Travellers stopped; schools broke up at 11 o'clock; people lit up candles at noonday; and the fire shone as at night. Some people, I have been told, were in dismay, and thought whether the day of judgment was not drawing on. A great part of the following night also was singularly dark. The moon, though in the full, gave no light, as in our text. Perhaps some by assigning a natural cause of this—cribing it to the thick vapor in the air—will endeavor to evade the force of its being a sign; but the same objection will be against earthquakes being signs, which our Lord expressly mentions as such. For my part, I really consider the darkness as one of the prodigies foretold in the text, designed for our admonition and warning.'

"The following description of the extraordinary DARK DAY, was given by Dr. Adams, on the 27th of May, 1780, eight days after it occurred. He writes:

'We had a very extraordinary phenomenon the 19th day of this month. In the morning it was rainy till about nine o'clock, when the clouds broke away, and the sun appeared, but very red. After nine the clouds grew very thick, with the wind from the southwest in breezes. At half-past ten, it was uncommonly dark. The clouds appearing of a yellow hue. At eleven, the public school was dismissed, it being so dark that no person could read or write. It continued to grow darker till twelve, when it was so dark that we could not tell one person from another in a room with three large windows in it. In short, it was midnight darkness at noonday. The fowls went to roost, and there was a strong smell of smoke. It had been very dry for a long time, the wind having been at the east for four or five days, which drove the smoke back to the westward. And when the wind shifted, it brought it all down in a body, which together with the dense clouds, caused the darkness, which lasted to three o'clock, p. m., before it began to grow light. Thousands of people who could not account for it from natural causes, were greatly terrified. And indeed it cast a gloom on earth. The frogs and night hawks began their notes. At four o'clock the wind shifted to the northeast, which brought the clouds back, and at sunset it was again very dark. At nine it was darkness to be felt by more senses than one, as there was a strong smell of soot. Almost every one who happened to be out in the evening got lost going home. The darkness was as uncommon in the night, as it was in the day, as the moon had fulled the day before.'

"The following interesting record of the memorable darkness is extracted from 'Morton's Life of Mrs. Abigail Bayley,' who died at Hardwick, Vt. March 18th, 1846, at the ripe age of ninety years. She was the wife of Rev. Kiah Bayley, and was a pious, devoted 'mother in Israel.' Mrs. Bayley was twenty-four years of age at the time of the darkness, and the following from her "Diary" was written at Newburyport, Mass., where she was residing when it occurred :

*"May 19th, 1780.—Thursday was our preparatory lecture, and though feeble, I thought of attending. Immediately after breakfast I went to my chamber, and feeling depressed, I cast myself on my pillow. The room was uncommonly dark; a solemn stillness reigned all around. After a little while the chamber appeared so dark that I felt alarmed, rose and went down stairs. At the door I met Mrs. Coombs, who with anxious countenance asked if I had noticed the strange appearance of the sky! At that moment she opened the door and surprise fell upon us. The sky, towards which all eyes were turned, appeared of a yellowish hue. No distinct cloud was visible. There was no motion of the air sufficient to move a leaf, and darkness overshadowed the earth. The ship-yard was before our door, but no sound of the workmen was heard. The cattle which had been turned to pasture came along homeward, and lowing as they slowly returned. The birds were fluttering on the trees, and hiding among the leaves as when a thunder-storm is coming on. The fowls hastened to their roosting-places. All nature seemed hushed, as though Jehovah was about to make himself known by some mighty act. Every eye was turned upward, every one inquiring 'What is going to take place?' Some asked, 'Is the judgment*

day approaching?" The vessels at the wharves with sails loosened and colors unfurled, appeared as in mourning on some great occasion. Not a color waved at mast-head, nor a sail showed the least appearance of any wind. The bells rung for meeting. The sailors poured into the house and filled it. Mr. Spring (Rev. Samuel Spring, pastor of the North Church in Newburyport,) standing at his place, cried, "O earth, earth, earth! hear the word of the Lord!" In speaking he excelled himself. The congregation was motionless, and heard with intense and solemn interest."

"Among others I copy the following interesting testimony from Bro. D. T. Taylor's reminiscences of the dark day. Looking over a few days since the first volume of the 'American Academy of Arts and Sciences,' published in 1785, we noticed an account of a very uncommon darkness in the States of New England, May 19th, 1780, by Samuel Williams, Hollis Professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy in the University at Cambridge. We present here an abridged form:

'This extraordinary darkness came on between the hours of ten and eleven A. M., and continued till the middle of the next night, but with different appearances at different places. It seemed to appear first in the S. W., and came on with the clouds that came in that direction, the winds blowing from that quarter. In most parts of the country it was so great that people were unable to read common print—determine the time of day by clocks or watches—dine—or manage their domestic concerns without the light of candles. The prospect was extremely dull and gloomy. Candles were lighted in the houses; the birds having sung their evening songs disappeared and became silent; the fowls

retired to roost: the cocks crowed as at daybreak; objects could not be distinguished except at a very little distance, and everything bore the appearance and gloom of night. The darkness appears to have extended all over the New England States. It was observed as far east as Falmouth—now Portland; to the westward it extended to the farthest parts of Connecticut and Albany; to the southward all along the sea-coast, and to the northward as far as our settlements extended.'

"But Professor Williams says nothing of the terror with which it was viewed by a vast majority of the people of New England. This, indeed, surpassed description. Many were full in the belief that the day of judgment was come, and conducted themselves accordingly. Even when they found that the trumpet was not sounded, nor the dead raised, that the darkness was dissipated, and the regular succession of day and night restored, they imagined it the forerunner of some direful disaster which the crying sins of a guilty land would speedily bring down upon it."

"The *Connecticut Journal*, New Haven, May 25th, 1780, states:

"The appearance was indeed uncommon, and the cause unknown.' The *Massachusetts Spy*, May 25th, 1780, did say: "This unusual phenomenon excited the fears and apprehensions of many people. Some considered it as a portentous omen of the wrath of Heaven, in vengeance denounced against the land. Others as the immediate harbinger of the Last Day, 'When the sun shall be darkened and the moon shall not give her light.' Yet what the natural causes were which produce this uncommon appearance, may be a question which well deserves philo-

sophical inquiry, which, perhaps, might afford to those who indulge themselves in the abstruse and curious researches of natural causes, a large field for philosophical speculation.'"

"Surely, it is unphilosophical to suppose the smoke of a volcano, in the midst of dispersing and flying winds should be wafted such a distance in so dense a form, as to produce such darkness for three or four hours, 'over the whole of New England,' etc., and then suddenly leave all clear again. It is not so in a smoky atmosphere, the darkness in such cases, appears and disappears more gradually; and usually continues longer. Again, had such a cloud of volcanic smoke produced the dark day, it would seem still more unnatural, that after several hours of its entire passing over, it should thus cover the heavens *again*, in the total darkening of the largest part of the following night. And more strange it would be still, that a cloud of smoke should travel so *swift* as to pass over 1000 miles extent at once, when natural clouds are supposed to travel seldom more than ten miles an hour, or two hundred and forty miles a day. And, indeed, why would it not be as honorable to the Word of God, and useful to man, for philosophers to presume on the probable natural cause of the darkening of the sun precisely so, and about as long, and for the rending of the rocks and veil of the temple, etc., when Christ was crucified, as in case of the dark day? See Matt. 27, 45, 51-53."—H. J., *Ed. Bible Reader.*

But Jesus predicted, also, other celestial phenomena, as constituting the immediate signs of his appearing. He said, "And the stars shall fall from heaven." Matt. 24: 29.

And on the night of Nov. 13th, 1833, the memorable "falling of the stars," which, like the darken-

ing of the sun and moon, remains unexplained to this moment. We quote the following graphic description by eye-witnesses of the amazing splendor.

"The following observations upon the falling stars of November 13th, 1833, was furnished by Henry Dana Ward for the New York *Journal of Commerce*, of which city he was at that time a resident. I insert in connection therewith, the remarks of the late H. Jones.

**THE FALLING STARS.**—In your paper this morning, some notice is taken of the phenomenon of yesterday. It comes so far short of the view taken of it by myself and a number of friends who gazed upon it with me, that I send you the story of that eventful scene as we witnessed it. One of the family arose at five o'clock A. M., to prepare for leaving the city in the seven o'clock boat. He threw up the window to see whether the dawn had come, and behold the east was lighted up, and the heavens were apparently falling. He rubbed his eyes, first in doubt, but seeing on every side the starry firmament as if it were broken up, and falling like the flakes of snow and whitening the skies, he aroused the whole family. At the cry, "Look out of the window," I sprang from a deep sleep, and with wonder saw the east lighted up with the dawn and meteors. The zenith, the north, and the west, also showed the falling stars in the very image of one thing, and of only one I ever heard of. I called to my wife to behold; and while robing, she exclaimed, "see how the stars fall!" I replied, "That is the wonder;" and we felt in our hearts that it was a sign of the last days. For truly "the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig-tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind." Rev. 6: 13. This language of the prophet

has always been received as metaphorical. Yesterday it was literally fulfilled.

'The ancients understood by *aster* in Greek and *stella* in Latin, the smaller lights of heaven. The refinement of modern astronomy has made the distinction between *stars* of heaven and *meteors* of heaven. Therefore, the idea of the prophet, as it is expressed in the original Greek, was literally fulfilled in the phenomenon of yesterday, so as no man before yesterday had conceived to be possible that it should be fulfilled. The immense size and distance of the planets and fixed stars forbid the idea of their falling unto the earth. Larger bodies can not fall in myriads unto a smaller body; but most of the planets and all the fixed stars are many times larger than our earth. They can not fall unto the earth; but these fell toward the earth.'

'And how did they fall? Neither myself nor one of the family heard any report; and were I to hunt through nature for a simile, I could not find one so apt to illustrate the appearance of the heavens as that which St John uses in the prophecy before quoted. 'It rained fire!' says one; another—'It was like a shower of fire!' another—'It was like the large flakes of falling snow before a coming storm, or large drops of rain before a shower.' I admit the fitness of these for common accuracy; but they come far short of the accuracy of the figure used by the prophet. 'The stars of heaven fell unto the earth.' They were not sheets, or flakes, or drops of fire; but they were what the world understands by 'falling stars'; and one speaking to his fellow in the midst of the scene would say, 'See how the stars fall!' and he who heard would not pause to correct the astronomy of the speaker, any more than he would reply, 'the sun does not move,' to one who should tell him 'the sun is rising.' The stars fell 'even as a fig-tree casteth her untimely figs, when

she is shaken of a mighty wind.' Here is the exactness of the prophet.

The falling stars did not come as if from several trees shaken, but from one. Those which appeared in the east fell toward the east; those which appeared in the north fell toward the north; those which appeared in the west fell toward the west; and those which appeared in the south (for I went out of my residence into the park) fell toward the south. And they fell not as the ripe fruit falls; far from it; but they flew; they were cast like the unripe fruit, which at first refuses to leave the branch; and when under a violent pressure it does break its hold, it flies swiftly, straight off, descending; and in the multitude falling, some cross the track of others, as they are thrown with more or less force, but each one falls on its own side of the tree. Such was the appearance of the above phenomenon to the inmates of my house. I walked into the park with two gentlemen of Pearl Street, feeling and confessing that this scene had never been figured to our minds by any book or mortal, save only the prophet. What should be next we were at a loss to conceive, consistent with the usual course of events. We asked the watchman how long this had been; he said 'about four o'clock it was thickest.'

'We gazed until the rising sun put out the lesser falling stars with the lesser fixed stars, and until the morning star stood alone in the east to introduce the bright orb of day. And here take the remark of one of my friends in mercantile life, who is as well informed in polite learning as most intelligent merchants of our city who have not made science their study. Sitting down to breakfast we spoke of the scene, and he said, "I kept my eyes fixed on the morning star. I thought while that stood firm we were safe; but I feared every moment that would go, and all would go with it." Be assured, Messrs. Editors, this was the language of nature in full flow

of feeling, just after an hour's watch of the magnificent scene, and was met with an open response of approbation from other intelligent eye-witnesses. The reader will see that this remark proceeded from an almost irresistible impression of intelligent eye-witnesses that the firmament had given way—that the whole host of stars had broken up—yet hope clung to the morning star, which never shone more glorious.

'In this narrative I have spoken not of causes, but of appearances, and the appearances according to the impressions they made on men. I know not how to convey a more accurate notion of them, and yet some will say 'it is fanciful.' Such may know my opinion, that no fancy is adequate to realize with any description the solemn interest of the scene; and that it required no fancy to heighten the picture, but a sound, well informed, and enlightened reason, to check the fancy, and to restrain it from running headlong into the idea of the thing which this scene is made in prophecy to prognosticate. Men will say 'Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.' 2 Pet. 3: 4. 'But the day of the Lord will come,' and although with him a thousand years are as one day, and one day as a thousand years, it is wise to learn from the teachings of his providence as well as of his word. No philosopher or scholar has told or recorded an event (I suppose) like that of yesterday morning. A prophet of 1,800 years ago foretold it exactly, if we will be at the trouble of understanding stars falling to mean falling stars; or '*hoi asteres tou ouranou epesan eis teen geen*', in the only sense in which it is possible to be literally true. Would I stop all business? No. '*Be diligent in business*,' is the apostle's word, and that must stand.'

"Mr. Ward, on present inquiry, has furnished the following additional remarks on the phenomenon:

'This scene astounded men from two o'clock A. M., until half past six A. M., and yet no alarm was made, no public notice was given. It is often asked, 'Why did they not arouse the city?' I reply, the overwhelming interest of the scene was such that the man who went out of doors to wake his neighbors forgot his purpose, in mute astonishment at the sight; and one who would extend his hand toward a bell-knob might be drawn from the reach of his design by the shower of stars that on every side alike caught his attention, and threatened his head, and seemed to fall all around him.

'Many witnesses did affirm, in the midst of the scene and after, that they saw the stars fall to the ground; but questioned closely, the fall was behind the houses, or over the fences, and proved so far an optical illusion.

'The dawn was a full hour that morning earlier than usual, and the whole eastern sky was transparent like molten glass, so as I never witnessed before or since. An open arch of brilliant light arose from the east, above which arch stood the morning star, inexpressibly glorious for its brilliance and firmness on the face of the dark, transparent, and bursting firmament.'

"It is now nine years since the foregoing communication was furnished for the *Journal of Commerce*. Not a word of the description seems to be overdrawn. Many things might be added to fill it up; but it is better for it to remain the honest and candid impression of the mind the day after the scene, than to be diluted with subsequent reflections. The description is right, whatever instruction it may convey to the reader's mind; but the writer's mind

is disposed to receive it as in the beginning. The impressions were irresistible, and are abiding."

"From the *Christian Advocate and Journal*, Dec. 13, 1833 :

'The meteoric phenomenon which occurred on the morning of the 13th of Nov. last, was of so extraordinary and interesting a character as to be entitled to more than a mere passing notice. . . . The lively and graphic descriptions which have appeared in various public journals, do not exceed the reality. No language, indeed, can come up to the splendor of that magnificent display ; and I hesitate not to say, that no one who did not witness it, can form an adequate conception of its glory. It seemed as if the whole starry heavens had congregated at one point, near the zenith, and were simultaneously shooting forth, with the velocity of lightning, to every part of the horizon ; and yet they were not exhausted—thousands swiftly followed in the tracks of thousands, as if created for the occasion, and illuminated the firmament with lines of irradiating light. Some coruscated in their course, and thus connected themselves with others by lateral paths of brightness ; while many sped their way in straight and even lines, and left luminous streaks behind them, which continued some seconds after the meteors were lost in the distance, or extinguished in the density of our atmosphere. They differed both in magnitude and velocity, some appearing as mere points, and others of the size of Venus and Jupiter . . . . (Signed,) F. REED.'

"The following extract is taken from the *Family Magazine*, of New York :

'A magnificent meteoric display was witnessed in this vicinity early on Wednesday morning. We learn from those whose privilege it was to see it,

that the air was literally filled with shooting or falling stars for nearly two hours, say from four until toward six o'clock. They were seen shooting in every direction from a great height, and were falling in a continual brilliant shower toward the earth. As usual in such displays, their size and brilliancy were variable. A teamster who was on the road during the time, compared the scene, in this respect, to a heavy fall of snow, though the luminous bodies moved with incomparably greater celerity. Others say they were visible down to the horizon ; some descending obliquely, but more generally in a perpendicular direction, and sometimes tapering off to a narrow stream. We do not learn that the hissing noise which sometimes accompanies these phenomena was heard on this occasion. The boatmen at the wharves, we understand, were greatly terrified at the apparent falling of the heavens.'

"A writer in the *New York Daily Advertiser*, thus describes the appearance on that morning, in this city :

'About four o'clock in the morning, a large meteoric body, resembling a ball of fire, exploded in the zenith of the heavens, and poured a continuous stream of flaming particles on the sky beneath. The increasing scintillations from this luminous globular body were showered down like drops of falling rain, illuminating the whole visible horizon, and scattering rich rays of light on each airy path as they fell. After this meteoric shower of fiery rain had for some time descended, a luminous serpentine figure was formed in the sky, which, on its explosion, produced a shower of fire equally brilliant and incessant. The inflammable particles then apparently cohering in one ignited mass, rolled up in a ball to the zenith : and from this lofty elevation burst, and shot out streams of electric fire from its luminous orb, which continued to fall until the hour

of six in the morning, when the dawning day put an end to their glory and their flight."

"From the Newark *Sentinel of Freedom*: 'The meteoric phenomena of the 13th was seen through the whole length and breadth of the country, presenting in most places a similar appearance. It is a little remarkable that the Aurora Borealis was observed at Buffalo, and at Keene, N. H., as we learn it was, and not elsewhere. In some places the meteors appear to have been seen quite down to the surface of the earth. A correspondent of the New York *American*, at Acquackanonk, in this county, says they varied in size from the bulk of a pea to that of a walnut, and were of various colors—red, blue, yellow, and white. Several came within a foot of the writer's person, and one exploded close to his face, and instantaneously disappeared without any perceptible odor.'

'The Sussex papers describe the exhibition in their vicinity as having been somewhat singular. The people seem to have been much alarmed. They thought that the stars had in reality 'shot madly from their spheres,' and that the whole economy of nature was returning to its original chaos. Daylight, which soon commenced dawning, by eclipsing the more distant stars, served to strengthen the illusion. Nay, so certain was one individual that several stars had actually fallen, that he felt seriously offended at a gentleman who doubted the possibility of such an occurrence. Another person says that he kept his eye upon the morning star, resolved that if that departed, 'he should give up all hope.' Some thought that the world was about to be destroyed—others that the day of judgment was at hand, with many more equally startling apprehensions.'

"From the Charleston *Courier*: 'We have been informed by Capt. Jackson, of the Revenue Cutter

*Jackson*, who was at sea that night, at the distance of nine miles from the land, that the heavens were illuminated with the meteors during nearly the whole night, as far as the eye could reach, in every direction; presenting a spectacle of uncommon magnificence and sublimity, attended with frequent explosions resembling the discharge of small arms. We learn also that a meteor of extraordinary size was observed at sea to course the heavens for a great length of time, and then exploded with the noise of a cannon. Our devotions to the 'sleepy god' debarred us the high gratification of being among the privileged spectators of the brilliant exhibition of natural fireworks.'

"The editor of the *Columbia Spy*, in reference to the late remarkable appearance of the heavens, says: 'Many of the people in the country were alarmed; some thought that the last day had arrived. A clergyman of a neighboring township, who is in the habit of holding a social prayer meeting on Wednesday evenings, informs us that his meeting this week was composed of a large and attentive audience, which was such a remarkable circumstance, that he could attribute it to no other cause than the alarm which had spread on account of the strange sights in the morning.'

"Meanwhile the earth gave symptoms of her end;

And all the scenery above proclaimed

That the great last catastrophe was near.

\* \* \* \* \*

The race of men, perplexed, but not reformed,  
Flocking together, stood in earnest crowds,  
Conversing of the awful state of things.

Some curious explanations gave, unlearned;  
Some tried affectedly to laugh; and some  
Gazed stupidly; but all were sad and pale,  
And wished the comment of the wise. Nor less  
These prodigies occurring night and day

Perplexed philosophy; the magi tried—  
 Magi, a name not seldom given to fools  
 In the vocabulary of earthly speech—.  
 They tried to trace them still to second cause;  
 But scarcely satisfied themselves; though round  
 Their deep deliberations crowding came,  
 And wondering at their wisdom, went away,  
 Much quieted, and very much deceived,  
**THE PEOPLE, ALWAYS GLAD TO BE DECEIVED."**

That these signs in the “sun and in the moon and in the stars” (Luke 21: 25) are the precursors of the immediate coming of Christ is clear; for the Saviour added, “And THEN shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.” Matt. 24: 30. And this language can apply to no other event than Christ’s second coming in judgment at the end of time; for in the next verse he further declares, “And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.” Matt. 24: 31. And these events have surely not yet occurred.

The next event in the series is the “*Sign of the Son of Man.*” This, also, will “appear” in the heavens. What it will be is not revealed. But it is revealed that at sight of it “all the tribes of the earth” will *mourn*. By “all the tribes of the earth” must be understood the masses of the unsaved who are totally unprepared to look in the face of him whom they have rejected and contemned. They

will “mourn” because the “sign of the Son of man in heaven” will signalize the close of the probationary period; the opening of final judgment scenes; the ushering in of the administration of justice and righteousness, and the determination of eternal destiny.

This hasty glance at *one* of many concurrent lines of revealed evidences, must go far toward convincing the thoughtful that we are at the threshold of the most august events.

The Master concluded his answer to the question of the disciples—“Tell us when shall these things be? and what shall be the *sign* of thy coming and the end of the world?” Matt. 24: 3—with the following words: “Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh. So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors.” Matt. 24: 32, 33.

And that is the position of the waiting “bride” at this moment. The “*signs* in the sun and in the moon and in the stars” have already occurred. The “sea and the waves roaring” has been witnessed. “Earthquakes in divers places” have startled, and continue more and more to alarm whole communities. The “distress of nations with perplexity” is everywhere apparent. And our guilty and doomed world stands face to face with fast approaching judgment.

How solemn, how august, how grand is this time! At any moment the “sign of the Son of man” may

be seen in the heavens. No one can point out any great prophetic event yet to occur *before* the Saviour shall be seen "coming in the clouds of heaven." The judgment blast of the archangel's trump may rend the heavens and shake the earth in an hour. The mighty Lifegiver's call may vibrate through the length and breadth of the vast death-valley, waking the myriad slumberers from their dusty couches, before another sun has set. Our High Priest may come through the blue veil to bless his waiting people while these words are being read.

**At farthest,** the day of the Lord is "**AT HAND.**"

"Be **YE** therefore also **READY.**"

"Put on your armor now, ye righteous! put  
The helmet of salvation on, and gird  
Your loins about with truth; add righteousness,  
And add the shield of faith, and take the sword  
Of God—awake and watch!—The day is near,  
Great day of God Almighty and the Lamb!  
The harvest of the earth is fully ripe;  
Vengeance begins to tread the great wine-press  
Of fierceness and of wrath; and Mercy pleads,  
Mercy that pleaded long, she pleads—no more!  
Whence comes that darkness? whence those yells of  
woe?

What thunderings are these that shake the world?  
Why fall the lamps from heaven as blasted figs?  
Why tremble righteous men? why angels pale?  
Why is all fear? what has become of hope?  
God comes! God in his car of vengeance comes!—  
Hark. louder on the blast, come hollow shrieks

Of dissolution! in the fitful scowl  
Of night, near and more near, angels of death  
Incessant flap their deadly wings, and roar  
Through all the fevered air! the mountains rock,  
The moon is sick, and all the stars of heaven  
Burn feebly!

\* \* \* \* \*

Heaven's trampled Justice girds itself for fight!  
Earth, to thy knees, and cry for mercy! cry  
With earnest heart, for thou art growing old  
And hoary, unrepented, unforgiven!  
And all thy glory mourns! The vintage mourns!  
Bashan and Carmel, mourn and weep! and mourn,  
Thou Lebanon! with all thy cedars, mourn.  
Sun! glorying in thy strength from age to age,  
So long observant of thy hour, put on  
Thy weeds of woe, and tell the moon to weep;  
Utter thy grief at mid-day, morn, and even;  
Tell all the nations, tell the clouds that sit  
About the portals of the east and west,  
And wanton with thy golden locks, to wait  
Thee not to-morrow, for no morrow comes!"

## CHAPTER XV.

## THE FINAL AND FADELESS GLORY.

*"Wipe off the tears from the cheek, and drop the dirge out of the song, and come to the coronation."*

The divine conception of restitution, joy and beauty will find completeness in the new birth of nature, the glorification of ransomed humanity, and the universal establishment of peace, under the righteous scepter of the Second Adam.

The wonderful redemptive undertaking will have a splendid consummation. What began in tears and shame will end in majesty and glory. Brows that were crowned with thorns and wet with the dews of sorrow will sparkle with diadems of peerless splendence. Death will surrender to life, and the long night of sadness will break into endless day.

Nature will be at her best. The primal order and beauty will adorn all things. Perfection will sit enthroned in all the vast domain. Not a misshapen tree or leaf or flower. The foliage will never lose its freshness. Fruitage will be spontaneous. There will be no autumn time, but endless summer. The whole earth will bloom in perennial sweetness. The song of many-plumaged birds will fill the air, and

royal animals will roam o'er all the fruitful plains in friendly concourse.

"The tyrants of the plain  
Their savage chase give o'er;  
No more they rend the slain,  
They thirst for blood no more;  
But infant hands fierce tigers lead,  
And lions with the oxen feed."

The new world will be under government. It will have its throne and King and grand metropolis. At its centre will stand its royal capital city, more glorious than Nineveh, or Babylon, or the old Jerusalem, but as real and literal as any city that ever stood on earth. Its architecture will be unique. It will be built by the hand that framed the worlds. "For he—Abraham—looked for a city which hath *foundations*, whose builder and maker is God." Heb. 11: 10. The "foundations" will be laid deep and strong, for it is to stand forever.

There will be but one city on all the new earth—vast, magnificent, eternal. It will stand in a perfect square, three hundred and seventy-five miles in length and breadth, and equally or *proportionally* high. Rev. 21: 16. What a spacious capital! large enough for an empire, yet not out of due proportion. Jerusalem was thirty-three furlongs in circumference; Alexandria was thirty in length and ten in breadth; Nineveh was four hundred furlongs round, and Babylon was four hundred and eighty. And the New Jerusalem will not be *relatively* larger, as the capital of the entire new earth, than were those ancient cities as capitals of their several realms.

The "great city" will descend from above; it will come down from God out of heaven. Rev. 21:10. As the King was first from heaven, then of earth, and then from heaven again, receiving his *investiture* from the throne on high, he will bring the capital of his vast empire with him. The New Jerusalem may answer to the Paradise of the ancient Eden.

The old Jerusalem was glorious ere it was marred by the invader's hand. But the City of the great King will surpass in splendor the conception of created mind. O the flashing beauty of its foundation stones! Rev. 21:19, 20. A "jasper" is of the color of white marble, with a light shade of green and red; a "sapphire" is of sky-blue, speckled with gold; a "jacinth" is of red purple; an "amethyst" is a violet purple; a "sardonyx" is red, streaked with white; a "sardius" is of deep red; a "chrysolite" of deep yellow; a "chrysoprasus" is of green, and transparent, with gold specks. What a blending of colors! What splendor, as these foundation stones sparkle in the light and glory of the throne! O beauty ineffable! O jewelled city of our God, descend, and shed effulgent splendor over all our new creation!

"There is the city in splendor sublime;  
O how its turrets and battlements shine!  
Pearls are its portals, surpassingly bright,  
Jasper its walls, and the Lamb is its light;  
Angels stand beck'ning us onward to share  
Glory unfading,—we long to be there."

The capital city of the new earth will be richly watered. As ancient Eden had its beautiful river,

dividing into four streams as it flowed away, so the New Jerusalem will be refreshed by "a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." This river of living water, pure and sweet, will be at once the pride and beauty of the city, and the welcome beverage of the happy bands who will throng its ever-green banks.

The royal city will be divinely lighted. It will need no light of sun or moon or stars, nor electric flash. These were but faintest tapers in presence of its grand illumination. But all that sacred and blissful enclosure will be filled with the glory of God and of the Lamb. Brighter than the light of a thousand suns, the flashing glory of the Lamb will pervade every part and portal of those vast courts of that "house not made with hands." All along the gold-paved streets; up and down the slanting shores of "life's fair river"; over and around the throne; into every nook and niche, will flow the heavenly effulgence, blinding the sun, putting to blush the stars, and driving night and darkness forever away. "There will be no night there." And far away over the flowering plains the *City's* glory will be reflected. "And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it."

"Pathways of gold that fair city adorn,  
Glittering with glory far brighter than morn."

The "holy Jerusalem" will be the infinite Father's ideal of blended majesty, beauty and glory. A fitting metropolis of the new creation. The honored seat of royal power, committed to the Son of

David—the Son of God. The high court of redeemed saints. The place of the *throne*, the *scepter*, the *crown*. The sacred temple to which the glorified throngs will go up to worship, and within whose walls great swelling hallelujah anthems shall roll up to the throne of the Lamb—up to the heaven of heavens.

In the pearl-ported metropolis the coronation of the Heir of David, the Rightful Ruler, will be enacted; his last enemy destroyed; his purchased realm renewed and decorated; his people—the ransomed of his blood—standing before him, he will ascend his throne amid ten thousand times ten thousand voices breaking into rapturous hosannas as they sing—

"All hail the power of Jesus' name,  
Let angels prostrate fall;  
Bring forth the royal diadem  
And crown him Lord of all."

Many a voice that is silent now will join in that grand installation hymn, in full-voiced gladness. Many hands that are folded and still now will wave green palms of victory as our Saviour-King receives his crown and scepter. Many eyes long used to weeping will glow with heavenly delight as they look on their King in the beauty of his person and the glory of his power. Myriads of little childish faces, sweet and blushing as flowers of heaven, uplifted toward the throne, will challenge the smile of the great Sovereign as he reaches out to them the scepter of his love. And angels, peering in at

the open gates, will wave their white hands in token of *heavenly joy*.

"Without, within, is light, is light;  
Around, above, is love;  
We enter to go out no more,  
We raise the song unsung before,  
We doff the sackcloth that we wore,  
For all is joy above.

**Ascend, beloved, to the life;**  
Our days of death are o'er;  
Mortality has done its worst,  
The fetters of the tomb are burst,  
The last has now become the first  
For ever, evermore.

**Ascend, beloved, to the feast,**  
Make haste, thy day is come;  
Thrice blest are they the Lamb doth call  
To share the heavenly festival,  
In the new Salem's palace-hall,  
Our everlasting home."

#### HOME AT LAST.

After the weary mortal years of sadness; after the long gloomy night of death; after the tears and the sighing and the partings; after the praying and the waiting and the longing, how transporting it will be to awake and arise to immortality and glory; to life and love and peace; to friends and home and health and plenty.

"How sweet it will be in that beautiful land,  
When freed from all sorrow and pain,  
With songs on our lips, and with harps in our hands,  
To meet one another again."

O the gathering, and the meeting, and the greeting! When all the saints that have ever lived and toiled and wept and died—sons of God of every race and clime and hue; patriarchs, prophets, priests and kings—when the vast multitude that no man can number crowd the green slopes of Mount Zion, what hand-graspings! What remembrances! What reunions! What embracings! What shoutings! What old remembered songs, sung to new music and with sweeter voices!

Home at last. Not one of all the ransomed left behind. The family of God complete. No vacant place; no missing voice; no saddened brow; no quivering lip.

"All joy and peace and gladness  
When Jesus comes!"

And then the glorious LAND! The whole earth one vast flowering Eden. Across its fruitful plains no cyclone's withering breath shall ever sweep; on its sunny hills no shadows fall; in its sweet smiling vales no graves. A land of fruits and flowers and shade. A land without a faded leaf or drooping wing. A land of plumage and song. The promised land whose beauty, gleaming through the misty ages, fell on prophetic vision. The land of rest and peace and plenty. The fair Canaan of our prayers and yearning hopes.

And, O the prospect of the *early* dawning of the promised glory! Our times touch all the focal points of inspired prediction. The holy words of type and sign are well nigh fulfilled. The heavens and earth and seas conspire to preach the end AT

**LAND.** A thousand voices proclaim the coming of earth's King—voices of nature's angry and colliding forces; voices of wind and wave; voices of the perplexed nations; voices of false prophets and deceiving anti-christs; voices of demons, babbling their premonitions of coming doom; voices of unfaithful servants, crying, "My Lord delayeth his coming": voices of the true watchmen, shouting from hill-top and valley, "The night cometh, and *also* the MORNING"; voices of the "*sure* word of prophecy"; voices from the great vale of death, crying, "How long, O Lord, how long?" responsive voices of the weary, waiting bride, calling through her tears, "*Come, Lord Jesus,*" quickly come. "*Even so.*" **AMEN.**

"The earth, emerging from her flood of fire  
Baptismal, by a new and heavenly birth  
Arose regenerate. The dews of God,  
As once in Eden, cooled the ardent soil;  
And rivers from innumerable springs  
Flowed, intersecting every gorgeous clime  
With living waters. Like a smile of light  
The Sun of Righteousness in rising shed  
Healing from his benignant wings; and earth  
Who came forth naked from her bath of flame.  
Felt his rich blessing at her heart, and smiled  
Responsive, and in blushing haste put on  
Her beautiful robes of immortality.  
And earth, from pole to pole,  
Was one vast Paradise."

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